



AMERICAL NEWSLETTER

FOUNDED 1945

DEDICATED AS A LIVING MEMORIAL TO ALL VETERANS OF THE AMERICAL DIVISION

OCT – NOV – DEC 2003

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Vietnam Editor:
Contributing Editor:

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Gary L. Noller
David W. Taylor

THE AMERICAL DIVISION VETERANS ASSOCIATION – 82 PHYLLIS DRIVE – SOUTH YARMOUTH, MA 02664

HOLIDAY GREETINGS



THE AMERICAL FAMILY

Commander
Richard L. Scales
[REDACTED]
Oakley, IL 62552
[REDACTED]

Sr. Vice-Commander
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[REDACTED]
Ormand Beach, FL 32174
[REDACTED]

Jr. Vice-Commander
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[REDACTED]

Finance Officer
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Mike Twomey
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Exec. Council Member
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[REDACTED]

Exec. Council Member
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[REDACTED]
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[REDACTED]

Exec. Council Member
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[REDACTED]
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[REDACTED]

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Paris Tognoli
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[REDACTED]

Chapter Commander
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Chapter Commander
New England Region
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[REDACTED]
Peabody, MA 01960
[REDACTED]

Chapter Commander
South Midwest Region
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[REDACTED]
Stonewall, TX 78671
[REDACTED]

Chapter Commander
Great Lakes Region
John L. Mathews
[REDACTED]
Verona, WI 53593
[REDACTED]

Chapter Commander
Far West Region
Richard A. Merlin
[REDACTED]
Riverside, CA 92516
[REDACTED]

Chapter Commander
East Region
David D. Eichhorn
[REDACTED]
Fleming, OH 45729-9643
[REDACTED]

Chapter Commander
Central Midwest Region
David A. Chrystal
[REDACTED]
Centralia, MO 65240
[REDACTED]

11/03

TAPS TAPS TAPS

PNC BERNARD J. CARROLL

It is with much sadness that we note the passing of Past National Commander, Bernard J. Carroll on August 24, 2003.

PNC Carroll began his military career at the age of seventeen when he joined the 110th Cavalry, Massachusetts National Guard. This unit later became the 180th Field Artillery, 26th Yankee Division, and was inducted into Federal Service on January 16, 1941 and was stationed at Camp Edwards, Bourne, Massachusetts.

Shortly after the outbreak of WWII the 180th Field Artillery, less the 2nd Battalion, was separated from the Yankee Division and became part of Task Force 6814, sailing from New York harbor on January 23, 1942 and heading for the war in the Pacific.

After several unit designation changes the 180th Field Artillery became the 221 Field Artillery, and part of the Americal Division. It was with this unit, the 221st Field Artillery, that PNC Carroll saw service with on Guadalcanal.

Following the Guadalcanal campaign Bernie was selected as a member of a cadre and returned to the States. After assisting in the training of the 756th Field Artillery Battalion, he returned once again, with this unit, to the Pacific war and was there when the war ended.

In the years after the war Bernie became active in the Americal Division Veterans Association and he served as National Commander from June 1989 until June 1990

Bernie and his dear friend, Barbara, were to be seen together at many of the National Reunions. They will always be remembered as the best dancers on the dance floor.

PNC Carroll passed away at the Brockton V.A. Hospital and was buried in the National Cemetery in Bourne Massachusetts.

May He Rest in Peace.

221 Field Artillery

Bernard Carroll
Jamaica Plain, MA
August 24, 2003

182 Infantry G Co.

Hugh Doherty
Woburn, MA
June 2, 2003

221 Field Artillery

William W. Goldrick
Acushnet, MA
October 22, 2003

125 Quartermaster B Co.

George Morton
Delray Beach, FL
March 2003

721 Ordnance

Edwin R. Denney (Ret)
Nashville, TN
October 4, 2003

182 Infantry C Co.

Ralph J. Fortier Sr.
Las Vegas, NV
August 9, 2003

182 Infantry

Edward G. Mathey
Stoneham, MA
August 19, 2003

101 Medical Battalion

Santo Puglisi
Groton, CT
May 20, 2003

125 Quartermaster

Paul W. Santogeanis
San Dimas, CA
May 29, 2003

132 Infantry C Co.

Joseph S. Trybula
Schiller Park IL
March 21, 2003

182 Infantry

Leo Silk
Jamaica Plain, MA
October 15, 2003

164 Infantry L Co.

James H. Winter
Bowie, TX
September 4, 2003

NEW MEMBERS

Mr. Robert M. Aube
?
Gorham, ME
#Self

Mr. Dave E. Blair
11 LIB A/B/E/1/20 Inf
Lemoore, CA
#John McKnown Jr.

Mr. Fred L. Brown
198 LIB E/D/1/6 Inf
Oak Lawn, IL
#PNC Gary L. Noller

Mr. Dale E. Carstens
55 Arty G Btry
Pontiac, IL
#PNC Gary L. Noller

Mr. Clifford L. Cobb
11 LIB A/1/20 Inf
Richmond, CA
#John McKnown

Mr. Floyd Cribbs
196 LIB C/3/82 Arty
Gloucester, MA
#Frederic Wonson

Mr. Richard Downs
?
Falfurrias, TX
#Self

Mr. Richard Frohreich
11 LIB D/1/20 Inf
Stayton, OR
#PNC Gary Noller

Mr. William Grady
198 LIB C/5/46 Inf
Columbus, GA
#Self

Mr. James L. Herrnstein
198 LIB 723 Main Bn.
Chillicothe, OH
#Self

Mr. Gregory P. Kaminsky
11 LIB A/1/20 Inf
Fort Lauderdale, FL
#John McKnown Jr.

Mr. John Lichtenauer
82 Arty B/1/82
Lenexa, KS
#Timothy Dewald

Mr. Jack L. Mutchler
198/196 LIB B/1/14 Arty
Tucson, AZ
#Don Ballou

Mr. James F. Barrett
1 Cav 1/1/d Troop
Marlton, NJ
#Kenneth Balesengr

Mr. Myles Borstad
23 Admin Co.
Blaine, MN
#PNC Gary L. Noller

Mr. Sorio J. Caravalho
11 LIB A/1/20 Inf
Roseville, CA
#John McKnown

Mr. Roger Caruthers
198 LIB Helicopter
Rockwood, TN
#John W. Harris

Mr. Glenn W. Crews
196 LIB 408 Radio Res
Pensacola, FL
#Bill Bacon

Mr. John W. Danforth Jr
198 LIB C/5/46 Inf
Tifton, GA
#Don Ballou

Mr. Ronald D. Dunning
198 LIB B/5/46 Inf
Porterville, CA
#Pete Davenport

Mr. Richard T. Gibbs
198 LIB Hdq/C/1/52 Inf
Flint, MI
#PNC Gary L. Noller

Mr. Douglas L. Herier
198 LIB Div Arty
Tipp City, OH
#Don Ballou

Mr. Leonard Howe
11 LIB A/1/20 Inf
Kelso, WA
#John McKnown Jr.

Mr. David Krueger
11 LIB B/4/3 Inf
Royal Oak, MI
#Don Ballou

Mr. Harold P. Lutz
11 LIB A/1/20 Inf
Warrenton, VA
#John McKnown

Mr. Coy Napier
11 LIB D/4/21 Inf
Flatwoods, KY
#Self

Mr. Robert N. Nicota
1 Cav C/1/1
Roanoke, VA
#PNC Gary L. Noller

Mr. Walter Pudlowski
Task Force Oregon
Grantville, PA
#Robert Gustitus

Mr. Henry Ruiz
198 LIB A/5/46 Inf
San Antonio, TX
#Cameron Baird

Mr. Ronald R. Towery
198 LIB A/1/52 Inf
Harrisburg, IL
#R. Castronova

Mr. John D. Weber
11 LIB A/1/20 Inf
Ft. Worth, TX
#John McKnown Jr.

Mr. Nicholas V. Polizzi
11 LIB A/1/20 Inf
Quaker Hill, CT
#John McKnown

Mr. Stephen D. Pye
198 Lib C/1/6 Inf
Lincoln University, PA
#Mark L. Deam

Mr. Ronald R. Towery
198 LIB A/1/52 Inf
Harrisburg, IL
#R. Castronova

Mr. Wayne Waara
11 LIB A/1/20 Inf
Baltimore, MD
#John McKnown

Mr. Dennis Zavala
198 LIB B/1/52 Inf
West Chicago, IL
#Conrad C. Geibel

Mr. Randall S. Watson
11 LIB C/4/3 Inf
Mount Olivet, KY
#Bernie Chase

Mr. Russel Wright
196 LIB C/2/1/Inf
Ivesdale, IL
#R. Thornton

ATTENTION - ATTENTION - ATTENTION

Check the dues date, after your name, on the address label on this Newsletter. This date means that you dues are PAID UP TO THIS DATE

If you do not agree with this date check with the Adjutant immediaily.

There has been some misunderstanding on this and also the dues cards that are mailed out when your dues are due. Your dues card is not activated until receipt of your check and then your dues are paid until that date on the card,

NOT STARTING THAT DATE!!

AMERICAL DIVISION ARTILLERY REUNION

The Americal Artillery Veterans from many areas of the United States came to Pigeon Cove, Tennessee on May 13 to 16 to attend their annual Reunion.

Florida, Alabama, Indiana, North and South Carolina, New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania are some of the states represented by the attendees.

Thirty five people including veterans and family members spent this time together. Tom Wathen, 93 years old, from California, was escorted to the Reunion by his son John.

We convened at the Holiday Inn Resort. The many attractions in this area gave us the opportunity to enjoy each others company while being entertained.

Several members visited nearby Gatlinburg and Cades Cove in the Smokey Mountains. Others went to see the "shows" and "Dollywood". We also had the unique opportunity to see 19 antique Bentley Autos from 1923 and up, in our parking lot for the one night they chose our hotel. This group of owners came from England via ship for the Eastern U.S. Tour.

At our business meeting and banquet Chairman Bob Miller reported on his work to bring our membership list up to date. To his Reunion notices that were sent out, he received notices from many who were no longer able to travel because of sickness, disability or old age. Many members sent donations for reunion expenses. Bob would like to take this opportunity to thank them all. The thirty five attendees voted to meet in Asheville, North Carolina next year.

We were deeply saddened with the news from Carlo Deporto, when he arrived, on the death of his wife Bette.

We were all disappointed that Elbert Horton was not able to attend.

Bileen Tunis
Secretary

HAVE YOU CALLED THAT BUDDY YET?
TOMORROW MAY BE TOO LATE!!

EASTERN REGIONAL CHAPTER
DC DE KY MD NJ NY OH PA VA WV

COMMANDER
David Eichhorn
Fleming, OH 45729
Tel: [REDACTED]

VICE COMMANDER
Jav Flanagan
Cranford, NJ 07017
Tel: [REDACTED]

SECRETARY
Joe Tunis
Lake Ariel, PA 18436
Leo Orfe - Sergeant-At-Arms
Everitt Williams - Chaplain
Visit our web site at:
<http://home.who.rr.com/sidneyalum/advaecr/>

TREASURER
Mark Deam
Sidney, OH 45365

EASTERN REGIONAL REUNION

Rehoboth Beach, Delaware, October 7-10, 2003--Most of us arrived on Tuesday in time to settle into our home away from home for the next three nights. The Breakers Hotel is located within walking distance to the boardwalk, beach, and the main drag of shops and restaurants. A delightful promenade down a quaint street brought us to Jake's Seafood Restaurant for our first meal together. This was the beginning of the excitement of seeing old friends and welcoming new ones.

The hotel provided us with their banquet rooms. This is where we met for catered buffet breakfasts, informal "snack and chat" meetings and our business banquet.

Wednesday morning a bus brought us to Dover Air Force Base for a tour of their museum. The museum is in a huge hanger filled with vintage war planes and related material. We all enjoyed a luncheon buffet on the base before returning to the hotel.

Thursday the bus took most of us to the Midway Slots in Harrington, Delaware. The non-gamblers had some free time to drive to the many tax free outlet malls or walk the boardwalk. One ingenious couple took the ferry boat to Cape May, New Jersey and back.

Thursday evening we enjoyed the dinner buffet. This was followed by our business meeting. Following the invocation by Leo Orfe, we observed a moment of silence in memory of our departed comrades.

First time attendees, David Taylor, Elmer Wright, Norman Walker, Philip Carpenter, Steve Pye, Brendon Mahoney and Reinhold Schiessl were welcomed with applause.

The minutes were read, amended, and approved. The treasurer reported income and expenses and the members voted to re-elect the slate of officers for this coming year.

Wendall Strode is the reunion chairman for 2004. His proposal to have the reunion in Bowling Green, Kentucky was approved by everyone.

This year is the 20th Anniversary of the founding of our chapter. A proposal was made and approved to present the charter members with a form of commemoration.

A call for a round of applause was given to Bob Kelly and David Eichhorn in appreciation of the work in organizing this reunion.

Alice Mullen purchased, and had everyone sign, several Get-Well greeting cards to be sent to regular attendees that couldn't make it to the reunion.

Door prizes were donated by Wade and Dee Rodland, Jay and Mary Ann Flanagan. Mary Ann also baked and brought cakes and brownies for all to enjoy.

Door prizes and centerpieces on the tables were provided by Harold Conklin, the hotel night clerk, a Vietnam and Gulf War Veteran. Harold also provided a PA system and a VCR and TV for our use.

Many thanks to you all for making another reunion a memorable event.

Joe and Bileen Tunis paid a visit to Pete and Julie Messina. Pete is a past Chapter Commander and also Past National Commander. Pete is also a charter (founding) member of the chapter and gave the original charter document to Joe who is now chapter secretary,

A few word from Bob Kelly: I have started to set up a bus trip (of Berk's County, PA) to the World War II Memorial dedication May 29, 2004. More information will be following.

Mark your books for October 7th to 10th, 2004 for the Bowling Green, Kentucky reunion. Chairman Wendall Strode will be finalizing many arrangements over the next few weeks.

GREAT LAKES REGIONAL CHAPTER
IL, IN, MI, MN, WI

COMMANDER
John Mathews
Verona, WI 53593

ADJ/FIN OFF
Terry Babler
New Glarus, WI 53574

The Great lakes Chapter would like to thank everyone that attended Kokomo, Indiana Reunion on September 18-21, 2003. There were seventy-five (75) Americal veterans that signed in at the main tent. The dates for the 22nd annual Kokomo Reunion are September 16-17-18-19, 2004. Make your reservations NOW to attend.

Our next event will be in New Glarus, Wisconsin for the 18th Annual Winterfest R & R All Veterans Festival and Reunion. The dates are: January 15-16-17-18, 2004. We will begin with a parade on Friday night at 9:30 p.m. in downtown New Glarus followed by a dance at the fire station. Events are planned all weekend for your enjoyment. New Glarus is a Swiss town of approximately 2000 with easy access to all events and hotels. A listing of all events will be available in the hotel lobbies. The Americal has had a very good attendance at this event. We are expecting four (4) Regional Commanders, two (2) former National Commanders and our present National Commander in attendance this January, 2004.

So, are you ready for another Operation L-Z Oceanside II All Veterans Reunion in Florida? The Great Lakes Chapter is one of five sponsors for this event. It will be held at the Holiday Inn Oceanside Resort in Melbourne Beach. There are tentative plans for two outside events at night in the pool deck area for Wednesday and Thursday nights. In addition, the Florida Vietnam Veterans Reunion will start on Friday, April 23, through Sunday, April 25, 2004. Don't miss this one, it will be a good time!

And, of course, Rich Merlin is planning a great Reunion in Reno, Nevada on June 24-25-26-27, 2004. Many special events and activities planned. The Great Lakes Chapter will definitely be present! Again, don't miss this one-make your reservations now!

For those of you that may not be a member of the Great Lakes Chapter yet: the dues are \$5.00 a year which covers two Newsletters a year. For all current members, please check your mailing labels. If your dues expire by 2003 Nov, your dues are due NOW. If you prefer, go ahead and pay two years.

FAR WEST CHAPTER AZ, CA, CO, HA, NV, NM, UT

COMMANDER Richard Merlin Riverside, CA 92505	SEC/TREAS Gene McGrath Pahrump, NV 89048
--	--

Vice Commander - Kirk McFadden
Sergeant-at-Arms - Curt Rothacker
Chaplain - John Bowley

2003 CHAPTER REUNION

Our 2003 Chapter Reunion was held in Laughlin, NV from September 28th to October 1st. 59 members, family, and guests-some from as far away as the east coast-enjoyed sun and fun together at the Flamingo Hotel Casino on the beautiful Colorado River. The hospitality suite offered a panoramic view of the surrounding mountains, desert, and river. We all enjoyed renewing old friendships and making new ones.

A highlight of the Reunion was a bus trip to nearby Oatman, AZ, a historic and rustic mining town on Route 66. The trip included lunch and a tour of the 100 year old Gold Road gold mine. The tour went one eighth of a mile into the mine to a depth of 300 feet. On the return trip our bus was waylaid by outlaws who stopped it in the street outside Oatman, firing pistols in the air. Fortunately they just wanted to settle a score with "Law Dog" Dave Chrystal (Chapter Commander - Central Midwest). After taking him off the bus and "frisking" him, the banditos released him for ransom. The ladies enjoyed browsing the shops in Oatman, while most of us ex GI's favored having a cold one at the old hotel where Clark Gable and Carol Lombard spent their honeymoon in 1939. Most everyone took part in feeding and petting the burros that roam wild in the street of the town. Carrots for feeding are sold in several places; most at least, if not all were fed to the burros.

Our time together culminated with a reception and dinner dance on the final night. It featured great food and good music among fantastic company. Our raffle raised \$478, evidence the "one armed bandits" didn't get it all. Commander Rich Merlin presented each of his Chapter officers with a handsome commemorative Americal coin in appreciation for their dedication and hard work. In addition he gave a demonstration of how to dance the "Boot Scoot'n Boogie. Singing God Bless America together capped off the evening. The membership thanks Commander Rich for both the dance lesson and for doing and outstanding job of chairing this year's Reunion.

Our next Chapter Reunion will be combined with the National Reunion in Reno, June 24-27, 2004. See the center-fold of this Newsletter for full info.

CHAPTER DUES

Our annual Chapter dues of \$10 are based on the calendar year, not a specific month. We do not send individual statements. Payment of 2003 is now past due; payment for 2004 will be due 1 Jan 2004. Regrettably, we have had to drop several members this year for non-payment of dues. If you are not current, please help save the expense of mailing a reminder notice and send your check payable to ADVA Far West Chapter to:

Gene McGrath, Sec/Treas.
Pahrump, NV 89048

If in doubt of your status Gene at [REDACTED]
Thanks for your support

HOUSEKEEPING

Please send address and telephone number changes to your Far West Chapter Sec/Treas Gene McGrath in addition to the National organization. This will allow us to keep our Chapter roster current, and insure that you receive the Cannon and other mailings. We are also now compiling an e-mail address list. Let us know if you would like to be included and receive a copy of this list. It can be sent to: [REDACTED]. Thank you.

TAPS

It is with regret and sadness that we note the passing of our comrades and fellow veterans:

Larry O'Boyle	-	Past Chap. Com, 182nd Inf WWII
Alan Brown	-	164th Infantry WWII
Harold Aarhus	-	164th Infantry WWII
Chadwick Wendt	-	23rd SIT Vietnam
Paul F. Kercher	-	164th Infantry WWII

We send our heartfelt condolences and prayers to all these families

NEW MEMBERS WELCOME

This year our Chapter added 23 new members! All ADVA members living in our area are cordially invited to join the Far West Chapter. It's a great way to connect with fellow veterans and share camaraderie. We have annual reunions, and publish a quarterly color Newsletter to keep in touch. Yearly dues are only \$10. For membership application form, contact Chapter Vice Commander and Membership Chairman:

Kurt McFadden
Minden, NV 89423
Tel: [REDACTED]

We are happy to welcome the most recent new members to our Chapter:

James Lance	-	132nd Infantry AT Co. - Hemet, CA
Daniel Viergutz	-	1st Cav - Las Vegas, NV
John O'Brien	-	1/14 Arty - Lahaina, HI
Lawrence Christie	-	1st Cav - Moreno Valley, CA
William F. Kidd	-	23rd MP - Cotati, CA
Leo Pillow	-	198 LIB - Apple Valley, CA
John Mathews	-	1/14 Arty - Verona, WI

HAVE YOU PAID YOUR CHAPTER DUES YET?
YOUR CHAPTER NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT

ARTICLE 13 AMENDMENT

The Constitution and By-Laws of the Scholarship Foundation may be amended, or a new Constitution may be adopted by a majority vote of the members present and voting at any Annual Reunion, or regularly called meeting of the ADVA, provided that prior notice of at least one month has been published in the Americal Newsletter.

The Fund Chairman and Trustees propose a change to Article 2, paragraph A of the By-Laws. Currently Article 2, paragraph A reads as follows:

The purpose of the Scholarship Foundation is to provide college and vocational scholarships to children and grandchildren, including those by adoptions, of ADVA members and any child of an Americal Division veteran who was killed in action or died while on active duty.

The proposal is to change that paragraph as follows:

The purpose of the Scholarship Foundation is to provide college and vocational scholarships to children and grandchildren, including those by adoption, of current and deceased ADVA members, provided the deceased member held good membership standing at the time of death, and any child of an Americal Division veteran who was killed in action or died while on active duty with the Division.

ADVA SCHOLARSHIP FOUNDATION GIFTS DONATIONS AND REQUESTS

The Trustees of the ADVA Scholarship Foundation hope that all ADVA members consider the Scholarship Fund when planning their tax-free gifts, donations, or bequests from their estate. All such contributions to the Scholarship Fund are truly significant investments in the future of our country. Grants from the Scholarship Fund provide important educational and vocational assistance to the children and grandchildren of ADVA Members, who are some of the best and brightest of America's young people.

Contributions should be made out to the ADVA Scholarship Foundation, and bequests or death benefits proceeds should name the Scholarship Foundation as beneficiary. All contributions to the Scholarship Fund must be unconditional and without stipulation, and should be forwarded to the Scholarship Foundation Chairman at this address:

Mr. Bob Short
Kalamazoo, MI 49009

AMERICAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND APPLICATIONS

Completed applications forms together with all the required enclosures must reach the Chairman at address he designates no later than May 1st of each year. The application form requires the following of the applicants: name, address, Social Security Number (SSN), marital status, date of birth, place of birth, high school attended, high school graduation date: father's name, occupation and SSN, mother's name, occupation, and SSN, if sponsored by ADVA member, members name, dates with the Americal, unit, highest rank or grade; if

parents are deceased, name and address of guardian, name and address of school to be attended; applicant's signature.

For more and complete information, contact:

Robert G. Short, Chairman
Kalamazoo, MI 49009
Tel: [REDACTED]
email: [REDACTED]

THE FOLLOWING NAMED MEMBERS GAVE MORE THAN TEN DOLLARS IN MEMORY OF A LOVED ONE OR FRIEND

Jim and Ellen Doherty
in memory of
Hugh Doherty

Gloria O'Boyle
in memory of
Larry O'Boyle

Lee Kayork
in memory of
Glenn Klingaman

Tim and Sue Vail
in memory of
Glenn Klingaman

Bobby and Connie Peck
in Memory of
Glenn Klingaman

Roy Cordingley
in memory of
Glenn Klingaman

Bob and Betty Short
in Memory of
Glen Klingaman

Jim Buckle and Helen Smith
in memory of
Larry O'Boyle

GLENN KLINGAMAN

The ADVA has lost a valued associate member. Glen Klingaman, died suddenly of a heart attack on September 6th. Glenn's brother, Bruce, was killed in Vietnam while serving with the 1/46th Infantry. Glenn attended his first ADVA reunion in 1999 and hadn't missed one since. Being with us at these reunions seemed to be his way of honoring Bruce.

Glenn served with the Marine Corps from 1977 to 1977. He was commander of the Lakewood, New Jersey American Legion Post 166. Both the American Legion and the Marine Corps League participated in his memorial service.

Glenn is survived by his wife, Cindy, sons Bruce, Kevin and Kyle, as well as two brothers and four sisters.

Our Reunions won't be the quite the same without Glenn being there. Glenn always had a joke to tell and usually had a little smirk on his face that indicated he was about to pull something on someone or else had already done so and you just didn't know it yet. I'm sure a beer or two will always be hoisted in Glenn's memory at future reunions.

Bob Short

LARRY O'BOYLE

Larry was always so pleased to 'hang out' with all the 'guys' in the Americal. His death occurred on July 13, 2003. We had been married for 58 years.

He had been ill for a year and a half but was always in good spirits and known for his 'one liners'. The cause of his death was Metastatic Melanoma. He had a Catholic Mass and was buried in the Riverside National Cemetery with full military honors that included firing squad, a bugler, and a flag folding ceremony. His Chaplain from the Far West Chapter, John Bowley, was also there to say a fond farewell.

On Larry's behalf we thank all the members for their sharing and caring about Larry. With his Irish smile I wish you well.

Gloria O'Boyle

THE FOLLOWING INDIVIDUAL WERE EACH
AWARDED A \$500 SCHOLARSHIP

Jason writes: Dear Mr. Short,

It is an honor to be a recipient of an ADVA Scholarship. I look forward to depositing this check to Wake Forest University to help defray the cost of next years tuition. Along with the rest of the Americal Division, my grandfather faithfully served his country in World War II so that I might have the liberty to pursue an education in a free country. For both their service to country and for this scholarship, I am grateful to the members of the Americal Division.



Above: My grandparents, Otto and Jean Boehmig. Otto Boehmig served on Guadalcanal (721 Ord) and recently celebrated his 90th birthday. He proudly wears his Americal hat every day.

* Sincerely,
Jason W. Boehmig

Krissy writes: Dear Mr. Short and Committee

I sincerely want to thank you for your generosity and kindness in supporting today's generation of young adults trying to further their education. I

recently graduated from high school and plan on attending an out of state college called Indiana University of Pennsylvania. I have set my goals quite high and would like to become a neuropsychologist, which means I have to receive my doctorate. Without the contribution ADVA has offered to me, my education and dreams would be out of reach. Thank you once again, for I am honored to receive such a scholarship.



Krissy and Dad - James Stringham - 198 LIB C/1/6

Sincerely,
Krissy Stringham

Sasha writes: Dear Mr. Short,

I am writing to thank you for the \$500 scholarship check from the ADVA Scholarship Fund. As I begin my college career this September at the College of Staten Island,, it is good to know that my fathers unit in Vietnam, the Americal Division, cares enough about me to offer this great scholarship.



Daughter of Steve Maluk - 26th Engineers

I intend to make the most of my four years in college and I greatly appreciate the support you have shown me.

Sincerely,
Sasha Maluk

Brian writes: Dear Mr. Short,

I was very pleased to receive the ADVA Scholarship. The \$500.00 will be put toward my tuition at Western Illinois University.



Brian and his Dad - Kenneth - 196 LIB C/1/46 Inf

Your generous gift is greatly appreciated!

Sincerely,
Brian Andrew Gates

Abigaile writes: Dear Mr. Smart and Committee,

I would like to thank you for awarding me your scholarship in the amount of \$500. This generous award will be applied toward my tuition costs for my junior year at Virginia Tech. I am honored to have been chosen and, in addition, I can't begin to tell you how much it means to my father, Anthony Colicchio.



Abigaile and Dad - Anthony Colicchio - 18 Arty

My plan is to graduate with a degree in elementary education. Thanks to the Americal Division I am one step closer to achieving my goal.

Sincerely,
Abigaile L. Colicchio

Justin writes: Mr. Short,

Thank you for awarding me the Americal Division Scholarship. It was an honor to be chosen out of so many applicants. I will be attending the University of Illinois in the fall and I will use the money to help pay for my books. I am planning on majoring in architecture followed by two years of graduate for my Masters Degree.



Thanks again,
Justin Cline

Katherine writes: Dear Mr. Short,

Thank you so much for awarding me this scholarship. I greatly appreciate the financial support that you and the Americal Division Veterans Association have granted me. I am greatly honored to have been chosen for this scholarship. I will use the money for books and other material, which I will need throughout the school year. The essay I wrote is about some issues, ideals, and people who are very dear to me, therefore, receiving this scholarship is even more of a tribute, because it also honors them. Thank you, once again, for this great award, for it will help me achieve my goal of being a nurse, so I can serve my country and my fellow man.



Katherine and Dad - Bob Voelsing - 198 LIB E/1/6

Sincerely,
Katherine M. Voelsing

Craig writes: Dear Mr. Short,

I am honored and proud to have been selected as an ADVA scholarship recipient. My grandfather, William T. Mansfield, was my inspiration and as it was his story I shared, I would like to thank him as well as your association. I've enclosed our pictures for your use in the ADVA Newsletter. With my heartfelt thanks for your assistance with my college finances.



Craig and Walter Mansfield - 125 Quartermaster

Sincerely,
Craig E. Coutermash

Jenna writes: Dear Mr. Short and Committee,

I would like to thank you for awarding me a \$500 scholarship this year. This has been a great help to me and my family and has made my grandfather, Leonard Oliver, very proud. This grant will help me pay for my schooling this year at the University of Massachusetts where I am currently enrolled in Liberal Arts. I cannot even begin to tell you how much this means to me, and what an honor it is to be given this scholarship.



Jenna and Grandfather - Leonard Oliver - 221 F.A.

Thank you again for your generosity and helping me achieve my goals.

Sincerely,
Jenna Lynn Cooper

Kelly writes: Dear Mr. Short,

I am very pleased and appreciative to have been awarded a scholarship from the Americal Divisions Veterans Association. This award will certainly help me to achieve my dreams of attending college and pursuing an education in the field of Animal Science. I have enclosed a recent picture of myself along with one in which I was a few years old and my Mom had dressed me up in a set of BDU's to send my Dad off to one of his many summer training sessions in the Army Reserve over the years. We have always been a very patriotic family and I have always had a deep-seated respect for the veterans of our country. I can remember sending troops off to Desert Storm and welcoming them back home again at Westover AFB in Massachusetts. Our whole family would participate in these activities and we took pride in all the young men and women who had the fortitude to serve our country during very trying times.



Kelly Matthews - Then - And Now

My Dad was also very surprised to hear from a fellow Americal Vietnam veteran with whom he served. Apparently when the announcement of my scholarship award was made at your recent Convention, this individual checked with you to see if I was any relation to Dennis Mathews, whom he knew as a Lieutenant in Vietnam. Dad served in the 11th LIB. Obviously, I am, as Dennis is my Dad. He retired from the Army Reserve in November 1997 as a Colonel but still keeps active in both the ROA and ESGR.

I wish to thank you and all the Americal veterans for not only awarding me this scholarship but more so for the sacrifices they made for me and for this great country. I promise to do my best in college and to make all of you proud of me and my accomplishments.

Sincerely,
Kelly J. Matthews

Many thanks for your letters and pictures. Two more names will appear in the next issue to complete the list of awards.

Chairman Robert G. Short

Jeffrey writes: Dear Mr. Short,

I greatly appreciate receiving the ADVA Scholarship and would like to thank you, the Americal Division Veterans Association, and its members. This scholarship will help in funding my college education as well as providing encouragement. I hope that you will be able to continue providing scholarships and would like to again show my gratitude.



Sincerely,
Jeffrey Brumbeloe

Kathleen writes: Dear ADVA,

Thank you very much for your contribution to my education at Joliet Junior College. I really appreciate your generous scholarship support. It has helped me greatly by allowing me to concentrate more on schoolwork without having to worry about finances. The scholarship money is a great help in paying for my schooling and books. I would not be as far along in my education without your support.



Kathleen and Dad - Ernest Mitchell
(18th Arty - 3/Ser)

I think that scholarships are great things for students to work for because it gives them more motivation to continue their education. Again, I am very thankful for your contribution.

Sincerely,
Kathleen Mitchell

William writes: Dear Mr. Short,

Thank you for awarding an Americal scholarship to me. This money will aid me in pursuit of a degree in Mechanical Engineering at Georgia Tech.

I am very proud of my grandfather's service in the Americal Division in World War II and am grateful to all of the Americal soldiers who served our country. It is an honor to have a scholarship from the Americal Division.



Sincerely,
William Roby Jr.
Grandson of Calvin Reese Jackson

Laura writes: Dear Mr. Short,

I would like to thank you and express my utmost appreciation as a recipient of the ADVA Scholarship Award. The money will help out with my tuition as I continue to study Musical Theatre at Belmont University. I am thrilled to have been selected for this award since I know it means a great deal to my grandfather, Nicholas Shealy who is a World War II veteran of the Americal Division. Thank you again for contributing to my college studies.



Laura and Grandfather Nicholas Shealy - K/132 Inf

Sincerely,
Laura McLean

FOOTSTEPS - A WALK WITH MY DAD
by Edward John Gekosky Jr.

Part II - On to the Philippines

Fulfilling MacArthur's Promise at Leyte

The Japanese Empire builders carried out yet another unimaginable cruelty in the Philippines. Early WWII, the Americans and Filipino supporters surrendered to Japan only to be herded along "The Bataan Death March". Reminiscent of Nanking brutality went beyond imagination. Years of brutal occupation of the Philippines followed. As nauseating as the Japanese actions were, it gives me special pride to know that my father helped General MacArthur fulfill the promise to free the Philippines.

Sailing to the Philippines in January 1945, Jack Morton told me Frank Marion was a big winner playing cards. Many soldiers facing war gambled too much. Dad lost all his money in the same night. Frank gave Dad a gift of \$200, a large sum especially in 1945, from his winnings, and Dad lost all but \$20 over the balance of the night.

As in many of the island invasions, the Marines led the Leyte attack. (?) The Army 182nd Infantry reached Leyte and began "mopping up" around February 7, 1945. Since the Japanese seldom surrendered, "mopping up" meant having to root out and kill each Japanese soldier on the island. During the week of February 20, as one example, they enveloped and killed around 500 often well entrenched enemy. On March 2, the 182nd Infantry, at Coganigan, captured a key enemy command post, killing 105 in the process. On March 4, Bob Egler earned another Bronze Star. Jack Morton then watched his close friend and Dad's, Bob die, instantly as a knee mortar blew away the lower side of his back. To this day Jack is disturbed that Bob is listed as missing in action. Jack explained the event to Bob's family and is still in touch with them. As the Americal Division finished its work on Leyte, leaving the balance of the "mopping up" to the Filipino military, they tallied 3500 Japanese killed on the island and 68 captured.

Beach Invasion at Cebu

Dad and the 182nd Infantry stormed ashore at Talisay, Cebu on March 26, 1945. Cebu was defended by 12,000 Japanese that had every intention of fighting to the last man. The beach was heavily mined, with 10 of the first 15 landing vehicles hitting mines. The Americans were fortunate that the Japanese held their main force behind Cebu City, and the beach defense was geared for delaying rather than stopping. Ken Vander Molen, another recent acquaintance, and his twin, Gordon, entered at Cebu.

Go Chan Hill Explodes

The 182nd Infantry entered the ruins of Cebu City on March 27, to the wholehearted welcome of the population. Stiff resistance from the Japanese began in the battle for Lahug Airfield, the racetrack area, and the hills behind the city. On March 29, a bullet tore through Fred Davis creating a wound that would trouble him for the rest of his life. The Japanese had filled caves on Watt Hill, a portion of Go Chan Hill, with explosives. As the 182nd Infantry advanced, much of Watt Hill blew, decimating Company A and taking others with it. Full of vengeance, the 182nd took all of Go Chan Hill, and the important Lighthouse the next day. 85 pillboxes were destroyed in the process.

The Nighttime Bayonet Attack on Babag Ridge

Behind Cebu City, the Japanese had strategic terrain. American troops would have it very difficult to climb and fight. The enemy had every military advantage: position, observation, prepared defenses, supplies, and manpower. Company G stalled at a ridge behind Cebu City. for several days, the dominating position and strength of the Japanese held off Americans and withered our force. April 5th was reported as the fiercest fighting recorded in the campaign to date as the Japanese sent suicide charges against the 182nd. The Americans took Horseshoe Ridge, but then the Japanese counter-attacked. All personnel, typist, cooks, clerks, etc., were needed against the fanatical charges. Babag Ridge was proving even more difficult.

By April 12th, numerous attacks by the 182nd against Babag Ridge had been repulsed. Dad's Company G took particularly heavy casualties. Wounded men were often in the open and would be rescuers were easy targets. The ridge seemed impregnable. Captain Murphy, Commander of G Company, 182nd Infantry, led Dad and the others, in the first ever nighttime attack, (as far as anyone knew), uphill, against the impregnable position. They fought all day and only made it part way, being left in a precarious position. Rather than fall back for the night, they fixed bayonets and kept going. In the dark, anything that moved seemed to be the enemy. The Japanese rolled grenades and let go with everything else they had, down the Hill, as the Americans scratched their way up. Jack estimated that one sixth of the Americans that started, made it to the top of Babag Ridge. Dad, Jack and Ken survived. Ken's brother Gordon, was wounded April 1st, so likely here. Sgt. Frank Marion, after making it through the night, took a serious rifle shot to his right leg that caused much damage, just after daybreak. This was one of Frank's three WWII wounds resulting in substantial disability.

As a testimony to some of the fiercest fighting in the entire Pacific, Lt. General Robert L. Eichelberger, Eighth Army Commander and responsible for much of the fighting in the Pacific, later commented, "Considering the forces involved, and their relative strengths, The Babag Ridge positions were the toughest to reduce that he had ever seen." Two weeks later after the landing, Jack recalls personnel being down 50% and received replacements. Three weeks later, they were again down 60% and received more new replacements. They lost 110% of their strength the first five weeks on Cebu. Yet a few lucky individuals from the Company G Christmas (1943) arrival on Bougainville, like my father, were still on their feet. Dad went through Hell and back, but never could bring himself to tell me much about it, perhaps because I was so young. I cried as I read of these events, for everyone, but especially realizing Dad was there.

During the balance of April and May 1945, the Japanese retreated and the Americans followed. On April 20th, General Arnold found it necessary to drop leaflets on the Japanese to tell them they needed to stop the now heightened level of inhuman atrocities against civilians and that the Americans were taking names to punish the offenders later. Disease hospitalized Kan Vander Molen on June 6.

Japanese Surrender Cebu And The War

The Americal Division was relieved of combat duties in June 1945, with the enemy on Cebu in shambles. They had killed nearly 10,000 Japanese

in the Cebu campaign, taken 389 prisoners, and lost 449 of their own killed and 2000 or so wounded. Over 8000 were suffering from disease. General MacArthur commended the troops for Cebu, citing them as a model amphibious attack force. They began training for the invasion of Japan, and that would be the most serious of all,

Hiroshima, Japan was leveled August 6, and Nagasaki August 9 with atomic bombs. If Dad had invaded Japan, he and the majority of the Americal would not have lived. Word reached the Americal that Japan had unconditionally surrendered on August 15, but thousands of remaining Japanese on the island had to be convinced. 2667 Japanese finally came in on August 28, 1945, with several hundred more later. The war officially ended on the USS Missouri on September 2. Dad reached Yokohama, Japan on September 8, for occupation duty. Against all odds, Dad made it! Somewhere along the way he was promoted to Tech Sergeant. I found Dad's papers, recreation passes for him to visit Tokyo for September 16 and September 30, 1945, among the first U.S. soldiers to do so. He made it back to Kulpmont, Pennsylvania a few days before Christmas 1945.

War Time Friends Tell Me About Dad

The Americal Division Veterans Association website assisted me to locate Company G veterans. Imagine getting a 1944 picture of Dad in the jungle from Brownie and then being able to give him a 1944 picture of himself with his new Purple Heart! My mother Julia, my brother, and I met Jack and Brownie, near my brother's Oregon home. At our May 2002 get together, they gave me treasures of memory that I consider priceless.

1. In responding to my decades old question of why others were looking at Dad in "That Picture", they told me that "Your father was just being himself." They explained that Dad had a way of calming and relaxing soldiers, even in the worst moments of battle. In "That Picture", Dad was just doing what he was known for and what came natural to him. They valued him greatly for that ability.

2. They told me how Dad was always anxious to participate in "the games". He relaxed out of battle by playing volleyball and other games whenever he could. What a treasured remembrance to give my daughter, as she was a Junior Olympic Volleyball Player for many years and never knew he played.

3. Upon arriving in Japan just days after the war officially ended, Dad helped organize some of the first servicemen baseball games on Japanese soil. My son was an All State baseball player in his day, and my daughter a National Champion in softball who still plays in college.

Imagine my emotions being able to tell these previously lost stories to my children about their grandfather they never met, and imagine the new connection they now have to him.

This Becomes So Personal

More than anything, this research led me to understand how lucky I am to be here. "That Picture" indicates Dad was among eight of an original forty three that made it. Well, I learned that the picture of his platoon was taken on Bougainville. Leyte and Cebu were yet to come. The platoon was part of G Company. Of the 180 with Company G that arrived at Bougainville, only a small number made it with Company G to Japan. Nearly all of the others were killed, wounded, missing, diseased, or otherwise out of action. While the hospitalized made it home, it took an

angel at you side to keep marching across the Pacific with Company G. The story was much more than the picture told.

Remember Wally Bogush, the other Kulpmont boy Dad first found on Bougainville? Arriving home just a few days before Christmas 1945, Dad went to visit Wally for Christmas. Well, during the visit Dad met Wally's sister, Julia. They married and Julia is now my mother. Wally later moved to FINDERNE, New Jersey for work. Dad and our family followed him and settled in Manville.

Unknown to me until just recently, Dad brought a Samurai sword home from Japan. He gave it to my older cousin, Bob Duke, while teaching Bob, as a child, how to hunt. When Bob heard about my research, he told me about the sword and gave it to me. This sword will hang above a shadow box full of Dad's medals, that I am in the process of adding to. I want his Bronze Star, the Philippine Liberation Medal, complete with arrow head for his beach landing at Cebu, and the Philippine Presidential Citation that he earned.

And then, Dad's legacy lives on in another truly way. My son, Edward Derek Gekosky, married Michelle Japzon. Michelle's parents immigrated here from the Philippines. My half Filipino grandchildren, (Eddy and Maya) are able to be here because Dad helped clear the Japanese off the Philippines, and particularly off Cebu. Michelle still has family on Cebu. Imagine the pride that I have as I share Dad's story, especially to my children and grandchildren!

Honor Your Veteran

I encourage you to visit WWMemorial.com to add the name and a comment about a WWII veteran. Also, please visit WWIRegistry.com and search for my Dad's name. Feel free to share comments with me at EdwardJGekosky@hotmail.com

Edward J. Gekosky

Father Dunford

The article in the Jan-Feb-Mar 2003 edition of the Americal Newsletter was an exceptional tribute to Father Dunford. My husband, Otto, has told me many stories about the wonderful pastor and friend he was to all. Otto remembers Father Dunford vividly.

It was a pleasant surprise to finally see a photo of Father Dunford. Thank you for a review of his life through the Newsletter.

Along with the 164th Infantry, Otto's platoon of the 721st Ordnance, reinforced the 1st Marine Division on Guadalcanal.

We appreciate receiving the Americal Newsletter and we remember the good time attending the reunions of the past. Otto is now 90 years of age.

Thank you and many best wishes.

Jean Boehmig

Ed Note: Thank you for your kind words. Credit for the article on Father Dunford belongs to Dave Taylor, Contributing Editor.

ARE YOUR DUES PAID?

The Long Journey to War: Task Force 6814's Voyage to New Caledonia

Rapidly assembled after Pearl Harbor as an "odd assembly of spare parts and a military stew of men and equipment" these soldiers embarked in ships too small for the journey - and made military history.

David W. Taylor

Early Beginnings

December 7, 1941 was the fatal catalyst that launched America into World War II, but the destiny of the Americal Division was set into place months before, through the twisted fates of conquest and colonialism.

The capitulation of France to Germany's Army in June 1940 laid bare the question of France's colonial possessions around the world. One of the areas of particular concern was the South Pacific island and French colony of New Caledonia, which was rich in minerals and agriculture. Japanese designs of conquest throughout the Pacific included "limited occupation" for New Caledonia, much as it had accomplished in French Indo-China, in its bid to form "The Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere".

General Charles de Gaulle, having won control of the New Caledonia government over the pro-Vichy elements of Marshall Philippe Petain, offered New Caledonia as an advanced Pacific naval base for the United States. The bombing at Pearl Harbor shortly after de Gaulle's "offer" (more of a petition from the frantic French), set the die in place.

In early January 1942 the War Department General Staff set up a priority list for the shipment of troops to vital islands in the South Pacific. High on that list was New Caledonia. Brigadier General Alexander M. Patch Jr. was called to Washington from his post as Commanding General of the Infantry Replacement Training Center at Camp Croft, South Carolina.

Patch was to take charge of a force being assembled to be designated, Task Force 6814. In the early morning hours (7:00AM) of January 23, 1942 the first of seven transports - the *Argentina* - the largest ship and the convoys "flagship" cast off from the Brooklyn docks of its New York port of embarkation. As the Task Force sailed from New York, General Patch turned over nominal command to Brigadier General William Rose, while he remained in Washington to work with the War Department about their plans for the Pacific Theatre.

The Ships of Destiny

Francis D. Cronin, in his World War II history of the Americal Division, "Under the Southern Cross", notes: "Seven troop transports were quickly assembled to carry the task force: *Argentina*, *Barry*, *Cristobal*, *Ericsson*, *McAndrew*, *Santa Elena* and *Santa Rosa*. These ships represented practically all the vessels available along the East Coast in those hectic early days of the war."

The Newport News Shipbuilding & Drydock Co, Newport News, Virginia built the *SS Argentina* in 1929. Its former name



(Above) The *SS Argentina*. All ship photos appearing in this article can be purchased at Seaweed Ships Histories, [redacted], Sisterville, WV 26175. Website: www.USS-Seaweed.com. E-mail: [redacted].

was "Pennsylvania". The U.S. Maritime Commission operated it prior to the war.

The Newport News Company built the *Thomas H. Barry* in 1930 as well. Its former name was the "Oriente" and was operated prior to the war by the New York & Cuba Mail Steamship Company. The War Department in June 1941 purchased this vessel as the *Oriente*, and under the "Oriente" name, made five voyages from New York and one from New Orleans to Bermuda, San Juan, Port of Spain and St. Lucia. In October the ship was renamed the "Thomas H. Barry, in honor of Major General Thomas Henry Barry, U.S. Army.

The Bethlehem Steel Company, Quincy, Massachusetts, built the *SS Cristobal* in 1939. The Panama Railroad Company operated it prior to World War II.

The Blohm & Voss Company in Hamburg, Germany built the *John Ericsson* in 1928. Its former name when built was the "Kungsholm". The Swedish-American Line operated it prior to the war. The United States Lines Company subsequently operated it during the war. The ship was renamed "John Ericsson" in honor of John Ericsson, a nineteenth century Swedish engineer and inventor, who designed the Civil War ship, the *USS Monitor*.

The Bethlehem Steel Company (Sparrows Point, Maryland location) built the *J. W. McAndrew* in 1940. Its original name was the "Delt Argentino" and was operated by the Mississippi Shipping Company before its acquisition by the War department. The vessel was acquired by the Army at New Orleans on June 28, 1941 and renamed the *J. W. McAndrew* in honor of Major General James William McAndrew.

The Federal Shipbuilding & Drydock Company, in Kearny, New Jersey built the *SS Santa Elena* in 1933. The Grace Line, Inc operated it prior to and during World War II. The *Santa Elena* was in active commercial operation when the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor occurred.

The Federal Shipbuilding & Drydock Company also built the *SS Santa Rosa* in 1932. Like the *SS Santa Elena*, the *Santa Rosa* was in active operation prior to Pearl Harbor and was operated by The Grace Line during the war.

Sailing Off To War

These seven ships carrying Task Force 6814 steamed south along the Atlantic Coast, escorted by heavy cruisers, old-type destroyers, blimps and land-based patrol planes.

Howard Burroughs was on board the *Santa Rosa* and assigned to the 70th Coast Artillery Regiment (Anti-Aircraft). He remembers, "two weeks out from Brooklyn there was this terrible smell emanating from the hold of the ship. There was sauerkraut and lots of potatoes that were rotting fast. It was so bad the seagulls stopped following the ship. In the following week if anyone wanted to know where we were headed, just follow the barrels and rotten spuds that drifted in our wake."

"Of course after a few weeks we all stunk. We had no showers so the pipe fitters on the ships-crew got some black pipe, drilled holes in it, hung it overhead on the deck and - lo and behold - we had overhead salt water showers, but no salt water soap."

Burroughs also remembers, "The medics supply of 'blue ointment' was exhausted, everyone had the 'crabs' and they weren't the hard shell type!"

Karl Wagner, on board the *Barry* remembers leaving Brooklyn at 5:00PM on January 23rd (the first ship set sail early in the morning, as previously noted). "They refitted that ship with three tiered bunks in the ships hold for thousands of troops but kept the civilian crews. Off the East Coast of Virginia and the Carolinas our ships seemed to zigzag every 3,000 yards or so to evade enemy submarines. I learned later that period of early 1942 was revealed as the highest tonnage loss to German submarines during the entire war."

Wagner continues, "Every crash of the waves against the side of the ship sounded like a torpedo exploding ... our imagination was working overtime. Down in the cargo hold below where hundreds of us were packed in, 150 feet down in the belly of the ship ... every inch packed with soldiers' bodies and gear. We were advised by an officer we were going to a place we had never heard of, "New Caledonia", a French possession somewhere in the South Pacific".

Luther Bugbee was with the 754th Tank battalion on board the *Ericsson*. With signs of the ships former designation still apparent, many of the soldiers knew it under its previous name, the *Kungsholm*. His image of the ships' hold is still fresh in his mind: "there were six bunks from floor to ceiling on our deck and I imagine that's the way it was on all the decks. Pipes were installed vertically from the floor to the ceiling and then connected horizontally with more pipes. Our bunks were a white duck material that had grommets with holes around the edges. The bunks were laced around the pipes with some nylon cord that went through the holes and wrapped around the pipes. That was it. There were no ladders so if your bunk was up top you stepped on the other guys sleeping area to get up there."

Most etched in Bugbee's mind were the long waits for chow. "We had two meals a day and stood in line for 1 1/2 to 2 hours for each meal. It seemed we spent most of our time on the ship waiting in lines. I remember one day while in line for chow I got to a bulkhead and noticed someone had carved a tombstone onto it. The next day when I got to that place in the line, someone had carved the words; 'Here lies the body of the poor guy who died while waiting for food'. The third day someone else had etched the additional words, 'And here lies the poor bastard who died eating it'."

Through The Canal

Karl Wagner, on board the *Barry* remembers the heat of Panama. "We kept traveling south and it got warmer and



(Above) The *Thomas H. Barry*



(Above) The *SS Cristobal*

warmer. We were still wearing winter Army clothing ... long woolen underwear ... heavy khaki ... ordered to be in full uniform whenever going topside of the ship. We arrived in Panama, no such thing as shore leave, and then that sweltering hot thirty-six hour trip through the Panama Canal ... out to the open Pacific Ocean and zigzagging all the way so the enemy subs would have difficulty launching a torpedo. But, of course, this made the journey twice as long."

Across The Pacific

Bill McLaughlin (now deceased), in his book "*The Americal Generation*" notes, "Life on shipboard was crowded. Our *Argentina* was the largest and the flagship of the convoy. There were nearly 4,000 men on board, and lines were everywhere. Still, our bands, on the four Sundays of our cruise to

Melbourne, played concerts fore and aft, swapping positions each week. There were boxing matches and amateur shows, which were well received to relieve the tedium. Crossing the Equator called for King Neptune and his court to make us all shellbacks. One of our nurses, Marguerite Cooney, was his winsome Queen. She was radiant."

Fresh water was at a premium and soldiers were rationed to one canteen per day and sometimes less. McLaughlin's book notes: "Storms, some merely showers, could be seen a long way off, and since water was at a premium, and none available for showers, it became standard practice during the daytime to steer the convoy into a rain squall. Every man would, as the ships approached the cloudy patch of rainfall, strip naked and soap up quickly when in it. With luck it lasted long enough to get rinsed."

"Some took bundles of their filthy uniform clothing, and tying them on a cord trailed them alongside. I saw one chap haul in his rope only to find a ragged end where his bundle of clothing had been."

Not only was drinking water at a premium, but food was limited and not too appetizing. Bugbee, on board the Ericsson, remembers a constant diet of chili con carne.

McLaughlin's memoirs give vivid detail to their plight on the Argentina: "All week long the standard was bologna sandwiches with green mold on the meat. We were so hungry that somehow we got it down. Sunday, we were delighted to find we were being served turkey with a cream sauce, a delightful meal. Unfortunately, it had repercussions. Most of the 4,000 troops got diarrhea afterward. The heads were merely rooms with a metal trough set up at one end and seats over the trough for six men at a time. So many swamped the rooms that it became a disaster. Feces floated around the floor as the saltwater flushing the trough overflowed into the room and some men with weaker stomachs vomited at the smell and sight, adding to the horrible stench. There were incidents when men in the upper bunks of the six high stacks lost their control climbing down and poured it all over comrades in the lower bunks."

Dr. Robert Muehrcke, in his book, "Orchids in the Mud" notes, "Most men appeared content as they played friendly games of cards such as bridge, pinochle or hearts. Little, if any betting was done. However, the big games of chance were held below deck. There, craps and poker were played for extremely high stakes. The dice were rolled on a blanket, and the game-betting supervisor took a percentage cut. He made sure all bets were covered."

"The money from all men in the convoy eventually gravitated into the hands of a few. The high stakes caused the money to change hands repeatedly. A few men made a fortune while others lost a fortune. For example, Sgt. Walter J. Motyl won \$12,000 dollars. He sent \$9,000 home and had \$3,000 to spend in Australia. Money became scarce. There were no paydays. Later, in Australia, money was almost non-existent."

As the long voyage became longer, the inevitable difference in conditions for officers and enlisted surfaced with some resentment, along with the resentment of boredom, scarce drinking water, lack of activity and every other plague that could affect a large force living like sardines for an extensive period of time.

Karl Wagner on board the Barry, who would eventually be commissioned an officer in New Caledonia, remembers, "resenting the officers in their topside, comfortable individualized first-class passenger cabins;



(Above) The John Ericsson



(Above) The J.W. McAndrew

resenting their table linen, the silverware, the luxury class food the officers got, while the enlisted men were ladled out meager portions of food prepared in fifty gallon batches."

Each day after day and week after week the soldiers wondered if they would ever see dry land again. Wagner's image of time on the sea is still vivid. "We washed our undergarments and socks by tying them on a long rope, throwing them over the side and letting the bouncing/dragging in the sea get them cleaner." His memories get more vivid and personal: "I got a letter from my girl friend to whom I was engaged. She said she hadn't heard from me for six weeks so our affair was over."

Each day on the Eastern Coast or throughout the Pacific the daily fear was whether a enemy submarine would find the

convoy and attack it. The convoy ships and their protecting destroyers were widely dispersed. Luther Bugbee on the Ericsson recalls, "I never saw another ship whenever I was on the top deck. It was like we were the only one's out there."

Everything that was done was done with security as the first priority. Karl Wagner: "I worked in the garbage detail which was only once a day. We threw the garbage out the door, down at the water level, sunset only ... this way a Japanese submarine would have 10-12 hours between discovery of the convoy's garbage and getting close enough to attack Escorting destroyers dropped depth charges from time to time. We didn't know if it was for a purpose or practice."

Cutting Out the Final Stretch

Francis Cronin's WWII biography of the Americal, "Under the Southern Cross" noted that the "inadequacy of facilities aboard the ships became more and more apparent." During the long stretch from the canal to Australia, "Life, at best, became simplified to the point of standing in line for everything. In a theme entitled 'Private Pillsbury Goes to Australia', Wolfred Freeman, an enlisted man in the 101st Medical Regiment stated his case:

"We stand in line for mess, we stand in line for the latrines, we stand in line for the showers, we stand in line for the medical, and now we stand in line for the canteen. No wonder they call 'em ocean liners!"

"During the later stages of the journey, as supplies of fresh water diminished, each officer and enlisted man was limited to one canteen of water per day... saltwater showers amounted to a mere wetting-down of the body since most ordinary soaps would not lather in the hard water.

"It was initially thought that the sanitary facilities on board the ships would be sufficient to handle the normal needs of the men. However, when dysentery broke out on several of the ships in mid-Pacific, these facilities were taxed beyond reasonable limits. The resulting conditions ranked as the most distressing of the entire trip."

Karl Wagner on the Barry recalls that "after about 30 days land showed up, Tahiti ... our first sight of land! Big excitement ... is this our destination? We watched handsome natives in outrigger canoes, loaded with lots of fruit, pineapple and mangoes. Some were selling rainwater from the bottom of their canoes. We were advised we were only stopping to refuel the ships at Bora Bora ... The Society Islands. We never got off the ships but traded by rope, down over the side of the ship, using sign language. We lowered army winter clothing to a mob of Polynesians in outrigger canoes ... rope coming up with bananas, coconuts and pineapple to supplement the impossibly meager rations supplied by the civilian crew cooks."

Wagner emphasized with the ships cooks, "Our civilian cooks were accustomed to feeding 50-60 crew members. Then they were tasked after we left New York with feeding 3,500 half-starved jostling soldiers. The shortage of food was due to the longer than planned crossing, traveling slow and zigzagging because of subs."

Finally on the evening of February 26th the convoy turned into the harbor of Melbourne, in southeastern Australia and moved quickly up to the docks. To reduce the risk of troop concentrations in the dock area, the soldiers were dispersed to Ballarat, Bendigo, Camp Darley, and Camp Royal Park and to other scattered parts of the city.

Cronin, in his book about the Americal, notes the stay in Australia was short-lived. "On the morning of March 6th Task Force



(Above) The SS Santa Elena



(Above) The SS Santa Rosa

6814, loaded once again on the seven transports pulled away from the Melbourne docks and set a course toward Noumea, New Caledonia. Early in the trip the Ericsson developed power trouble and was forced to return to Melbourne for emergency repairs. The remainder of the ships, escorted by fleet units of the U.S. Navy, moved on to Noumea."

On March 12th, 1942 the six ships of the convoy moved into Noumea Harbor from the Coral Sea. The dock facilities were wholly lacking for unloading the large ships, which arrived. The race was on to unload the ships and disperse the troops quickly. The possibility of Japanese air raids could not be overlooked. Within two weeks the 132nd and 182nd Infantry Regiments moved into assigned areas on the island, which was divided into two main areas, each assigned to one of the regiments.

The long and arduous journey of Task Force 6814 had finally and successfully ended. But the Task Force was just a number to the Army planners in Washington ... devoid of the hardships, which its members had endured for many long weeks. The mission complete, the report was filed and another designation came up on the Army's briefing charts: "Americal Division". It was a different designation but still the same men. And for those men whose world had been expanded over a long journey to places like the Panama Canal, Bora Bora and Australia, new places would be visited in due order. Places such as Guadalcanal, Bougainville, Leyte and the Philippines. And against the backdrop of the voyage to get them to New Caledonia, they would soon learn their journey had just begun.

ADVA RENO REUNION EVENT DESCRIPTIONS

HOTEL RESERVATIONS

Make your hotel reservations directly with John Ascuaga's Nugget Resort Hotel Casino. Call 1-800-648-1177 and identify yourself as being with the Americal Division Veterans Association. Room rates are \$85.00 per night. The hotel is located on Interstate 80 and just 10 minutes from the Reno-Tahoe International Airport. The Nugget also offers free shuttle service.

AIRLINE INFORMATION (10% DISCOUNT AVAILABLE)

American Airlines Discount code S5464AD
Southwest Airlines Discount code H0306

AUTO RENTAL

Avis 1-800-331-1212 Discount code AWD-D003737

MEMORY BOOK (Delivered approximately 90 days after reunion)

First Class, professionally upgraded, in full color, at least 24 pages including individual, unit, and event pictures.

TAHOE TOUR (FRIDAY, 6/25/04 8:30AM-3PM)

Scenic Lake Tahoe Tour. At an elevation of over 6200 feet, with an average depth of well over 900 feet, the lake is the highest, deepest alpine lake in the world. Visit Emerald Bay, the most photographed natural setting in the world. Feed Rainbow Trout at the Truckee River Headwaters. Enjoy some of the fabulous estates built on the lake. You will pass by the Kaiser Estate, where Godfather II was filmed. A lunch stop will be made at a lakeside restaurant where you'll enjoy a spectacular view.

VIRGINIA CITY (FRIDAY, 6/25/04 9:30AM-2:30PM)

Virginia City – once The Richest Place On Earth. Explore the history of the Great Bonanza Trail and the gold-seekers who blazed the first trails for the new settlers in the area. You will be escorted through the town – see historic mines, the old red light district, and the mansions built by the mine owners. Optional individual activities include mansion tours, or exploring the old-time shops and gambling halls still in operation. A lunch stop will be made in Carson City.

FRIDAY NIGHT RODEO (6/25/04 7PM-9PM)

"Americal Goes To The Rodeo!" Billed as the richest and wildest in the West, the rodeo is about 5 miles from the hotel. Shuttle buses are included and will be available from 5-11PM. Part of the rodeo experience includes the many different food booths, western booths, and arts and crafts booths located at the rodeo. Your ticket also admits you to the carnival located at the rodeo. The actual rodeo runs from 7-9PM, so you have plenty of time to enjoy some great food and beer. Light jacket recommended.

DONNER AND TRUCKEE TOUR (SATURDAY, 6/26/04 8:30AM-1:30PM)

At a crossroads of Western History, the Donner-Truckee area is rich in pioneer lore. A visit will be made to Donner Memorial Historic Park and its fine museum. It was here during the winter of 1846-47 that members of the famous westward-bound "Donne Party" played out their tragic rendezvous with destiny. After the museum, you will head to Truckee to browse the unique shops that only Truckee has to offer, then head for your lunch stop in historic downtown Truckee.

ART TOURING (SATURDAY, 6/26/04 9AM-12PM)

Centered in the Reno/Carson City area, you will be pleasantly surprised by the diversity and quality of the art available in Reno. Whether you are interested in gallery hopping or a serious collector, you'll find that each gallery and studio is unique. Among the studios to visit are a sculpting studio, weaving/basket making studio, watercolor gallery, tapestry gallery, and a wearable arts studio. The tour will visit those galleries and studios featuring the best available exhibits. Lunch is not included with the tour.

SATURDAY NIGHT DINNER DANCE (6/26/04 6PM-11PM)

A world class, award winning buffet dinner with carving stations and a dessert bar second to none. Live Band and Dancing. Entertainment featuring the "Silver Tappers" and much more. Recommended dress is business casual.

Make check payable to: "Americal Far West Chapter" and mail to:

Pat Levy
[Redacted]
Spanish Springs, NV 89436-7266

Reunion Chairman

Rich Merlin
[Redacted] (Home)
[Redacted] (Work)
[Redacted] (E-mail)

You will receive confirmation of your payment by mail.

**AMERICAL DIVISION VETERANS ASSOCIATION
NATIONAL REUNION REGISTRATION FORM
RENO, NEVADA JUNE 24-27, 2004**

Last Name _____ First Name _____

Spouse or Guest Names _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ War served in with Americal _____ Unit _____

REGISTRATION:

Early Bird Special

Before 5/1/04: \$20 PER PERSON X # OF PEOPLE () \$ _____
After 5/1/04: \$30 PER PERSON X # OF PEOPLE () \$ _____

MEMORY BOOK: \$20 PER COPY X # OF COPIES () \$ _____

TWO OPTIONAL BUS TRIPS FOR FRIDAY, 6/25/04, CHOOSE ONE ONLY:

TAHOE TOUR: \$55 PER PERSON X # OF PEOPLE () \$ _____
8:30AM – 3PM, includes lunch

OR

VIRGINIA CITY: \$35 PER PERSON X # OF PEOPLE () \$ _____
9:30AM – 2:30PM, includes lunch

— ♦ —

FRIDAY NIGHT RODEO: \$25 PER PERSON X # OF PEOPLE () \$ _____
7PM – 9PM, Shuttle Buses: 5PM-11PM

TWO OPTIONAL SPOUSE BUS TRIPS FOR SAT, 6/26/04, CHOOSE ONE ONLY:

DONNER & TRUCKEE TOUR: \$35 PER PERSON X # OF PEOPLE () \$ _____
8:30AM – 1:30PM, includes lunch

OR

ART TOURING: \$45 PER PERSON X # OF PEOPLE () \$ _____
9AM – 12PM, lunch not included

— ♦ —

SATURDAY NIGHT DINNER DANCE 6/26/04:

\$35 PER PERSON X # OF PEOPLE () \$ _____
6PM - 11PM

TOTAL: \$ _____

Make check payable to:

"Americal Far West Chapter" and mail to:

Pat Levy
[Redacted]
Spanish Springs, NV 89436-7266

Reunion Chairman

Rich Merlin
[Redacted] (Home)
[Redacted] (Work)
[Redacted]

You will receive confirmation of your payment by mail.

TRANSPORT REPORTER

Issue No.4 Vol No.1

February 4, 1942

SHOW BOAT SCORES A BIG HIT

In Hollywood they say its great, its colossal, its stupendous. We'll be more realistic and say Major Franco's troop of entertainers put on a darn good show Friday noon and evening.

It was well balanced entertainment considering the limited facilities. The singers were all good. The piano renditions showing real talent. There was tumbling dancing and comedy. Last but not least our old old friend Ed Maloney as a Master of Ceremonies doing his usual fine job.

Much credit is due our three hard working Chaplains, Capt. Leel and Lt's Masin and Smith, Thos Gedgood, 132nd Inf and Pvt. E. Maloney for a fine job they did in organizing and presenting the show.

Prizes were donated by the ships troop officers and distributed according to merit of performance.

"The Show Boat will be back soon".

ENTERTAINERS

Trio Singers

R. Price - H. Sullivan - C. Forsythe

"Old MacDonald Had a Farm"

"We've Been Working on the Railroad"

Wyman Pendelton - Singer

"I Get a Kick Out of You"

Don De Petrio - Comedy Singer

"That Old Gang of Mine" & "Mammy"

John Vukayan - Singer

"Jim" & "Down Argentine Way"

Charles Forsythe - Singer

"Yours" & "Marie Elena"

Walter Rielly - Piano Player

"To-nite We Love"

'Low Down in the Basement on the 90th Floor"

Burnes - Singer

"If I Did'nt Care"

Jim Albano - Voedler & Singer

"Cowboy Serenade" & Artillery Song

Wiess Twins - Tap Dancing

John Jaffe - Concert Pianist

Classical Composition

Master of Ceremonies - Ed Maloney

HELP KEEP YOU MESS HALL CLEAN

PUT REFUSE IN G. I. CANS

Edited and Distributed Aboard

TRANSPORT SANTA ROSA

GRACE LINE

En Route

Ed Note: Howard Burroughs, 70th C.A. sent me the above article. As a matter of fact, he sent me the entire issue of the above Newsletter that was put

out aboard the Army Transport, Santa Rosa, while at sea. Howard was one of the compositers for the Newsletter.

I would like to hear from any of the above mentioned names or members that knew them. Do you remember those happy days aboard a Transport?

132nd INFANTRY

On October 18, 2003, Ltc. Henry Ricci, former Medical Officer of the 132nd Infantry, presented a fifty foot flag pole and Flag plus a Memorial Plaque, to the Alumni Building of the Angelo State University. The Memorial Plaque was inscribed with the names of the 132nd Infantry men killed in the battle for Guadalcanal.

The above article was sent in by Rocco A. Solto, President of the 132nd Infantry World War II Association and he goes on to say:

Col. Ricci and his staff did a noble job of caring for the wounded on the "Canal" when we were fighting for command of Hill 27. With heavy enemy artillery fire, mortar shells and small arms fire pinning them down, the Colonel and his staff held their ground and still took care of the wounded that went to their tent. For his heroic achievements, the Officers and Directors of the 132nd World War II Association salute Colonel Ricci.

Congratulations to the Angelo State University Board of Directors and Committee for a wonderful patriotic day.

I have known Colonel Ricci since May of 1941 and he was friendly with all the officers and men. It is an honor for me and I salute him for both his friendship and generosity.

Colonel Ricci invited me to the ceremonies on October 18th but with regrets I had to down the offer due to illness in my household.

Sincerely,

Rocco Solto

President

132nd Infantry Assoc.

ATTENTION - ATTENTION - ATTENTION

In the last Americal Newsletter the name of George W. Gould was listed under Taps. This was an error. I have received a letter from George stating, "I am alive and well".

I am indeed sorry for this error. I was misinformed,

Your Editor

NATIONAL ORDER OF BATTLEFIELD COMMISSIONS

I am trying to locate all men, WWII, Korea, and Vietnam, who on the field of battle against an armed enemy received a commission from enlisted or Warrant status to commission status. It may be you or some one that you know. Contact:

J. C. Angier

St. Augustine, FL 32080-7451

IS THE NAME CHANGE A GOOD IDEA?

The Solomon Islands Broadcasting Corporation has just released a bulletin stating that Henderson Field is shortly to have a name change.

It is reported that a Japanese consulting firm has suggested to the Solomon Island Government that the name be changed to Honiara Airport. In its investigation did the Japanese seek advice from Solomon Islanders as to how they felt about a name change?

More than seven thousand Solomon Islanders, Americans, New Zealanders, Fijians and Australians died during World War II fighting for Henderson Field and Guadalcanal. Thousands of others survived the fighting but still remember the shared hardships and triumph that is represented by the name "Henderson Field".

The name Henderson is one steeped in history and emotion. It is the most famous airfield in the Pacific. Any change means that the Solomons is casting away the historic name and paying insufficient attention to the international emotions that the name Henderson evokes.

Before the Japanese recommendations were made did the Japanese ask the families of heroes such as Solomon Islander Sir Jacob Vouza and Bill Bennet or Sir Gideon Zoloveke and other Solomon Island veterans how they feel about a name change?

To change the name will inevitably run the risk of offending many international friends, especially the Americans. In this crazy world we need more friends not less friends. I would want the Americans on my side any day!

The argument for a name change may have been suggested for a perceived financial benefit, but it is not clear how this would evolve. It is hard however to imagine any more visitors coming to the Solomons because of a name change. More visitors will be the result of better marketing of Solomon Island activities and places, not a name change.

Vanuatu has retained the name Bauer Field as its airport, after a pilot, who also flew from Henderson. Their recent airport upgrade was also Japanese funded but it was not felt that therefore a name change was necessary.

Still in our region New Guinea has a Jackson Field also named after a World War II pilot. All around the world airports are named after famous people or fliers. In not one case has any change been made to these names.

It is noted that the Japanese are going to assist in further development of the airfield and its surrounds. Surely the suggested name change has not been linked to Japanese aid money? The Americans will be impressed! The Japanese economy owes its growth to its American trade and military protection.

The Solomon Islands is a sovereign country and will make up its own mind about a name change. It would be most unwise for the Japanese to put pressure however subtle or otherwise on the government.

The Government has more than enough financial troubles as it is, To change the name is going to cost a significant amount of money. There must be more pressing problems for the government to spend money on.

It is not a name that only belongs to the past. A search today on the Internet brought up 8.770 current articles about Henderson Field. The name Henderson is a significant tourism related asset that can be cultivated. It was only last August that the name Henderson brought more than two hundred visitors from the US. We also had US F18 fighter planes landing and flying over in salute of Henderson Field.

There are another two hundred US visitors coming over this August. Many of these are going on the Kennedy Island for a PT109 60th Anniversary swim. Are we shortly to change the name of Kennedy Island to something "more neutral"?

It is a fact that the Americans are looking at what they can do to assist the Solomons in preserving history and the surrounding historic sites such as Bloody Ridge. They wish to encourage more US and overseas visitors to the Solomons. A name change might even discourage these initiatives.

The name Henderson should be retained for a number of reasons. If for no other reason that it attracts badly needed tourists. At the very least the opinions of all Solomon Islanders should be considered before a name change occurs.

Our overseas veterans friends and allies have heard about this proposed name change. In fact the news has reached the highest political and military levels. Despite their immense disappointment they are aware that it is entirely a Solomon Island Government decision and can only watch in disappointment. It is up to the Solomon Islanders to win this fight on their behalf.

(This article was taken from "The Old Breed" published by the 1st Marine Division Association and sent in by Joe Micek)

DO YOU KNOW THIS MAN

Have found an Army dog tag in a stream at the back of Hill 27 in the Gifu (Mount Austen). Thought it might be someone from the 132nd Infantry. The name is Leslie R. Green. ASN 3410143 T41. Next of kin Mr. M L Greene Green Pioneer, LA.

Pioneer LA worries me I thought you were all from Chicago.

Do you have any way of finding out any details on Leslie?

John Innes

(This E-Mail message was received by Joe Micek from a good friend, Joe Innes in Honiara, Guadalcanal)

WERE YOU ON A COAST GUARD SHIP?

I am writing a book about Coast Guard Operations in WWII and would like to hear from members of the Americal Division who were involved in Amphibious Operations and/or other Ops with the Coast Guard between 1942 and 1945. Contact:

Mike Walling

Hudson, MA 01749

Tel: [REDACTED]

email: [REDACTED]

NEW CALEDONIA - SEPTEMBER 11, 2003

In spite of the strained relationship between the U.S. and France at least there is an exception in New Caledonia. As an example we had a very touching ceremony commemorating the victims of the 11th September held at the American monument, which you know.

The Americal Vice-Consul from the Fiji's was on deck. The governor and the various mayors of the island along with the city service such as the police and fire departments were there to place a wreath at the monument -- and not forgetting the boy scouts and the LaVallee's

Yes, it's still an oasis of goodwill toward the Americans. The Caledonians have never forgotten that if it were not for the U.S. New Caledonia would have been taken by the Japanese. Not only that, the American occupation was exemplary with medical services open to the people, discipline on the part of the military toward the populace, and in addition it opened the eyes to a modern world that laid dormant being so far from the mother country.

It was through Roger Gerold, our president of the Friends of America Club, and the mayor of Noumea, Jean Leques, who initiated the ceremony for the Americans and closed it with a high Mass at the church.

Emery LaVallee

Ed Note: The above was taken from a letter that I received from my friend, and your friend, Emery LaVallee. The Americal servicemen that returned to New Caledonia in 1992 will never forget the heart warming reception we were given and also the beautiful Memorial that was dedicated honoring the American servicemen.

Many thanks to you Emery, Roger Gerold, Mayor Jean Laques and the caring people of New Caledonia.

COMPANY G - 182nd INFANTRY
Connections From The Past
David Colamaria

I had always been close to my grandfather, Edward Monahan, I spent much of my life in and out of his house, at times living there, at other times just visiting. I knew him well. I knew about how generous he was, how intelligent and talented, how caring and giving. I also knew that he was a decorated veteran of World War II, where he served in the US Army, and fought in the Pacific. I knew he had received a Bronze Star, had served in the Americal Division, and that he was an infantryman. I remembered one or two stories he told me as a child and as an adult. Beyond that, I knew very little. About a month ago, in May of 2003, I resolved to find out more, and to document his story for future generations.

Unfortunately, my goal had one major obstacle to overcome. My grandfather had passed away in 1991. Knowing full well that his absence would make the task difficult (if not impossible) I still resolved to see what could be done. I started my research with relatives compiling stories he had told us over the years, official Army documents and scattered facts we thought to be true. The search left us with a great many holes. We knew the basic timeline of his service, but not the details, not how he fit into the big picture.

One of my uncles, Matt Monahan, pointed me to the Americal web site, where I was excited to find countless entries by veterans and relatives of veterans on the ADVA Locator pages. I skimmed through looking for references to G Company of the 182nd. I contacted a number of people, primarily the children of veterans from G Company. I did this with guided optimism. After all, what could I possibly gain from this, throwing out messages to faceless strangers on the Internet?

My guarded optimism quickly changed to surprise and fascination. I received emails back from three men, all sons of veterans from G Company. They were able to relay bits and pieces of the story of G Company to me, some with great background. This was more than I had hoped for. They were all friendly and helpful, obviously sharing the same pride and interest in the veterans from their families. I continued to trade messages with these men, and felt that I had been lucky to find people with some sort of connection, even if it was slight. Little did I know that a stunning connection was about to be revealed to me.

One of the gentlemen, John Mulcahy, was the son of John Mulcahy, another veteran of G Company. His father had passed away in 1998, and over time he had done some research and learned quite a bit about G Company. John has some documents and papers related to the unit, and mentioned to me in an email that he didn't see any mention of a Colamaria in the unit. I clarified the point, and replied that it was actually my mother's father, Technical Sergeant Edward A. Monahan. Moments later, I received a message back saying that of the 3 or 4 people he knew the most about, my grandfather was one of them. I was shocked, stunned, and touched. John informed me that he had war time photos of my grandfather, even letters from him.

The connection was more than I possibly could have imagined finding on the Internet. Further discussion revealed their friendship had lasted for another fifty years. John remembers his parents attending my grandfathers funeral service in 1991, and my aunt Marna Abessinio recalls him introducing himself to her in the receiving line as "Johnnie Mulcahy, Americal Division," She remembers it being a deeply moving experience, one that made her proud to be an American.

Revealing this connection would not have been possible without the ADVA Locator site. I have kept in touch with John Mulcahy, and he has been kind enough to send me photographs of my grandfather from the war, and the text of a letter written partially by my grandfather to his father. This letter is probably the best insight we have into my grandfather's daily life during his Army service, a treasure our family could not have found without the ADVA site. To all the folks who maintain the site, as a way to honor the proud veterans of the Americal, I extend my deepest thanks, for helping our family reconnect to a soldier we all knew and loved.

David Colamaria

COMPANY H - 121 MEDICAL BATTALION

Did you know Earnest A. Brown Jr. while serving with H Co. 121 Medical Battalion? Please Contact:

Ms. Gail Gebauer

Menifee, CA 92584



HONORING VETERANS
ON
VETERANS DAY - NOVEMBER 11

Armistice Day was primarily a day set aside to honor veterans of World War I, but in 1954, after World War II had required the greatest mobilization of soldiers, sailors, marines and airmen in the Nation's history; after American forces had fought aggression in Korea, the 83rd Congress, at the urging of the veterans service organizations, amended the Act of 1938 by striking out the word "Armistice" and inserting in lieu thereof the word "Veteran." With the approval of this legislation on June 1, 1954, November 11th became a day to honor Americal veterans of all wars.

We Salute
All Veterans



F COMPANY - 132nd INFANTRY

I am looking for someone that would have knowledge of the date that Pvt. Walter E. Stanek was KIA on Bougainville, Northern Solomon Islands.

His death occurred during an engagement while on a combat-reconnaissance patrol action along the Jaba River. To the members of the patrol this was known as the Jaba River Action but it is not recorded in the official records as such. I say this because having read both "Under the Southern Cross" and "Orchards in the Mud", neither has an accounting of this particular battle.

The date is important as it will provide me with a base from which to request certain records from the Army Records Center.

Our first patrol, outside of the established perimeter, gathered information that the Japanese had an encampment about one-half mile inland from the shore of Empress Augusta Bay and had between six and eight thousand bivouaced there. This information was based on the enemy movement within the area, the number of tents and the size of the Rising Sun Flag--it was huge!

During this action Pvt. Walter E. Stanek was wounded and Cornelio Lugo and myself dragged him out from under machine-gun fire, but he subsequently died from his wounds.

Immediately upon our return to the rear area I went on sick call because of blood poison in my right leg. At this time Captain Becker, Battalion Medical Officer, told me the that Lt. Mitchell had submitted the names of Cornelio Lugo and myself requesting that we be awarded a Silver Star.

This never happened.

My requests to the Records Center in St. Louis have turned up nothing for I had insufficient information. If anyone from F Company, 132nd Infantry was a witness to this incident and can supply me with the date that Walter E. Stanek became a casualty I would certainly appreciate it. Contact me at:

Frank J. Delimba

Ironwood, MI 49938

Tel: [REDACTED]

31st PORTABLE SURGICAL HOSPITAL

I received the April-May-June issue of the Americal Newsletter and I especially appreciate the articles that relate to the war on Bougainville, since that relates to the period when we were attached to Americal's 182nd Regiment. Our outfit, 31st Portable Surgical Hospital, consisted of four medical officers and thirty-three enlisted men. We were located between the East-West Trail and the Americal Road, about one hundred yards from Company B Collecting Company, and we ate with them.

We received our first casualty on 9 Mar 44, an officer with a sucking wound of the chest. We stabilized him and sent him on to the 21st Evac where, I understand, he died a day or so later. One of our other early casualties was an MP hit by a mortar round a short distance down the road near the saw mill. He had a severe head wound and died shortly after arriving. Not all of our patients died, however, and during the fight for Hill 260 we treated one hundred or so severely wounded men. As you know, it was a stressful time.

We later in May moved to a bivouac next to Company D Clearing Station, and worked there until the unit was transferred to the 37th Division. We made several excursions into the mountains and along the beach. It is interesting to note that of the five of us who tented together on Bougainville, three of us later became MD's, one entered a related medical field and one went home with an acute schizophrenic breakdown.

All of our medical officers and a majority of the enlisted men have since died. Even though it has been over fifty-nine years, the memories are as vivid to me as yesterday. I am greatly blessed to still be up and about enjoying friends and family.

I would love to hear from anyone who came in contact with our unit, as a patient, in Co B or D, especially the Clearing Station Lab where I worked.

Sincerely,
Stanley W. Allen Jr. MD

COMPANY B - 101 QUARTERMASTER

I am looking for anyone that may have known my husband, Joseph T. Sour, while serving with B Co. 101st Quartermaster. Please contact:

Mrs. Joseph T. Sour

Averill Park, NY 12018

ARE YOUR DUES PAID?

LIVING WITH SPAM

During the month of November, we will be honoring all our veterans, from all our wars, for their devotion to duty, their bravery under fire, and their love of their country.

Some of these former G.I.'s went above and beyond their call of duty, by accepting and actually enjoying, that "infamous" "delicacy" that service people were sometimes served, known as Spam.

Now Spam should never be construed as a junk product, manufactured from what many believe are left over from slaughterhouse or packing house by-products. By carefully reading the content label you will find that pork shoulder, ham and various spices, are combined to make a very nutritional canned meat product, several points above the other "notorious" canned meat, "corned beef".

We should commend, the many mess cooks, who had to come up with various menus to serve those ravenous G.I.'s without any of the amenities necessary to produce an acceptable meal. I specifically remember the day I was assisting our mess cook, Jonesy, and he was practically in a state of shock when he discovered that all he had left in the ration supply tent were several five pound tins of Spam.

I told him about how my mother would prepare Spam, during the depression years, when everyone had to conserve on their food budget. A one pound tin of Spam could make a decent meal for a five member family. She would slice the Spam in thin slices, dip them in egg and bread crumbs and bake. We would even enjoy them!!

Jonesy immediately went to work, slicing the Spam, avoiding the tendons that most Spam sent overseas contained, and dipping the slices in dehydrated egg liquid and bread crumbs he had made from stale bread. He popped them in his portable gasoline oven and shortly afterward their tempting aroma was wafting through the jungle clearing,

Jonesy was a little apprehensive, when the boys lined up to be served, as what he had posted at the mess hall entrance as pork fillets, with mashed (dehydrated) potatoes and canned peas. When I inquired later, about how the disguised Spam had gone over with the gun crews, he was ecstatic with joy, and answered, "My God Sack, some guys even came back for seconds!!

Needless to say, I got special treatment whenever I appeared in Jonesy's chow line.

Leonard "Sack" Owczarzak
746th AAA Gun Bn.

COMPANY I - 182nd INFANTRY

Here is a story about an incident that happened after we got to the Philippines and were at Ormoc after arriving there and doing some patrols in the area.

Company I plus Headquarters Company was detailed to go to the Camotes Islands---a three island group between Ormoc and Cebu where the Japanese were evacuating from Leyte through the Camotes to go to Cebu. In that area we were to stop the Japs from harassing the Philippine people on these islands and stop the Japs from evacuating through these islands and on to Cebu. This was just before we were to make the Cebu invasion.

We were gathered on the beach ready to get on barges to go to the Camotes and were gathering to board the barges, when one of our troops picked up a Jap parachute bomb and tried to do just what the Japs supposed we would do--get the parachute from the back of the bomb. When he pulled the chute loose it detonated the bomb and the explosion killed some men and wounded many more. It also flattened many of the jeep and truck tires in the area. It was a bad mistake and costly to many of our troops.

It was just one of those cases where a man did what he was told not to do and this was a mistake that cost the lives of some I Company men.

Honor and Courage,
Ray E. Poynter (1/Sgt Ret)

HISTORY DENIED

Since 1893, the U.S. Postal Service has been designing and issuing stamps to commemorate significant events, places and people in American history.

After protests from the Japanese government officials and intervention by President Clinton, the Postal Service reluctantly rescinded a planned stamp commemorating the swift conclusion of WWII through the use of the atomic bombs. This is the only commemorative stamp ever rescinded by the U.S. Postal Service. Ironically, the announcement was made public by the White House on December 7, 1994, exactly 53 years to the day after Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor.

A commemorative poster stamp was created in place of the canceled stamp to honor the sacrifices Made by a generation of Americans.

WERE YOU PREPARING FOR THE INVASION OF JAPAN?

The late Dr. Stephen Ambrose, in his last book, To America: Personal Reflections of an Historian, reversed his long held conviction about the use of the atomic bomb on Japan. Those Americans who were preparing to invade Japan may find this of interest.

Bill Borling
M Co. 132nd Infantry

CAN YOU HELP?

The Americal Association on New Caledonia is looking for pictures of American servicemen with black natives during our stay there. If you have such pictures and would like to donate them to the Americal Museum on New Caledonia mail them to:

Americal Museum Association
New Caledonia

HAVE YOU JOINED A CHAPTER YET?

This ia good way to make new friends and enjoy some of the great Chapter Reunions. Check the Chapter News section of this Newsletter. There is a Chapter in your neighborhood.

From the National Commander

Dear members,

I wish everyone a special holiday season and I ask each of you to do something for the troops overseas. I hope that everyone had a great summer and enjoyed the reunion in Little Rock. If you missed that one then you missed one of the nicest and laid back reunions in a long time. But now is the time to start thinking about the next reunion. It will be held in June 2004 in Reno, NV. If you miss this one you will be sorry you did. It is going to be great. Look for more information on the reunion in the Americal Newsletter and at www.americal.org.

There are some changes to annual dues that will take place on January 1, 2004. Annual dues will increase from \$12 to \$15. This is the first increase in annual dues in a number of years and is made necessary by increasing costs of operating the association. Life dues have not changed. World War II members will continue at the \$12 per year rate. The three-year rate will no longer be offered. We will continue to operate the association in an efficient manner and make all efforts to make the best use of your dues contributions.

Richard Scales; Co. B, 3/21st Inf.

Vietnam Historian report

Dear members,

I have completed the transcription of the 196th LIB S2/S3 reports from 1968. John Mansfield formerly of 4/31st Inf., provided these reports to me. The reports have references to Kham Duc, 1/52nd Inf., 1/20th Inf., and operations near Camp Evans. There are also references to the 227th Avn. Bn. loss of pilots, the Silver Star award to the Minutemen and others, and information related to Dong Ha.

This information fills in a lot of missing pieces for me. I did not previously understand why the 1/20th Inf. people talked about working in the 196th LIB AO in 1968. These reports explain this as well as the 4/31st operations around Camp Evans in 1968.

I received a CD-ROM that had the scans from the 1/46th Inf. album from 1969. It has lots of photos and names. Glenn Klingaman provided the CD-ROM. We need to get after these albums. They have individual photos with names, short histories, memorial information, and some photos of the main bases. Anyone who has a unit album is asked to contact me and let me know if I can receive a copy of the material.

I have CDs of these unit albums:

1967 - 14th Avn. Bn.
1969 - 123rd Avn Bn.
(E/723rd, A/123rd, B/123rd, variations. Missing 178th ASHC, 132nd ASHC variations which would have crew photos and names).
1969 - 176th AHC
1969 - 5/46th Inf. Bn.
1969 - 1/46th Inf. Bn.
1969 - 723rd Maintenance Battalion.
1970 - 132nd Assault Support Helicopter Company
1970 - 16th Combat Aviation Group

I have indexed the names and units from some albums into spreadsheets. One album that I have indexed, but do not have a scanning from of is the 1967 196th Lt. Inf. Bde. album. I have a Xerox copy of the album. There is also an F/8th Cav album that I have some Xerox copies of that should be scanned and indexed.

Anyone wanting a computer compact disc (CD) of all the files I have accumulated can have one by sending me their name and address along with a fee of \$15. The fee covers the cost of materials, postage, and handling. The files can be opened by a computer word processor. It helps if I know the software to be used (Microsoft, WordPerfect, etc.) I can also make a customized label for the CD if I know which unit the veteran was assigned to in Vietnam.

Send orders or other correspondence to Leslie Hines, Des Moines, IA, 50312. I can also be contacted at 7 or e-mail

John (Doc) Hofer accepts ADVA National Service Officer post

National Commander Richard Scales has appointed John (Doc) Hofer to be the ADVA National Service Officer. In making the appointment Commander Scales said, "It is my pleasure to announce the appointment of John "Doc" Hofer as the ADVA's National Service Officer. As you all know, the VA system is changing all the time. With someone on the ground floor the ADVA will be kept informed on what is going on in the VA system. I know Doc will do a fine job and he will be recruiting some of our other members for his committee." In accepting the appointment Doc Hofer responded with the following comments and ideas:

Dear members;

I wish to thank the officers of the ADVA for appointing me as NSO for ADVA. I think it opens doors for our guys and lets me share info about the VA. I am very proud to have this appointment and will do my best to help all combat veterans obtain help that is long overdue from the VA.

A few ideas I would like to present:

1. Form a Legislation Committee to understand current legislation and laws that effect us, what needs to be changed to meet our needs. Too often I see directives at the VA that have good intentions but are not adequately funded or prioritized to meet the needs of combat veterans, i.e., Purple Heart recipients, POWs, or the backbone of our nations armed forces, the infantrymen, helicopter crews, and combat arms members. We need to re-look at some of the policies and take care of those that paid the price. I would like volunteers that have some legal and legislative backgrounds and I will reach the medical experts to attempt to work together in getting the correct care to those that deserve it.
2. Keven Kavanaugh, a 1/46th Inf. vet, is the Wisconsin State Commander of the Military Order of the Purple Heart. He has worked with me and we have passed a resolution at the WI convention seeking dental care for Purple Heart recipients. This was presented at the MOPH National Convention in Rochester in August 03. This was a great experience and a start in an attempt to make some changes. The timing is right and it is about time.
3. I cannot actually handle VA claims but I hope to find some experts and share information on how to proceed with "legitimate claims". As we know, the grunts were at the bottom of the supply chain in Vietnam and we need to get near the top for the right reasons. Legislation could be corrected to give priority to "combat related claims" just as they do with older veterans' claims.

Please send ideas and information to be shared to me at: Dr. John Hofer DMD, 7888 Wood Pond Trail, Cross Plains WI 53528. You can phone me at [redacted] or [redacted]. E-mail can be sent to [redacted] (First Choice) or [redacted].

John "Doc" Hofer; Co. B, 5/46th Inf. & 23rd Med. Bn.

WWII Memorial dedication

The WWII Memorial is expected to be dedicated during special ceremonies in Washington, D.C. on Memorial Day 2004. The ADVA is making tentative plans to have representative on hand to honor Americal veterans that served and died in WWII. Tentative plans call for an ADVA information booth to be located on the Mall to greet Americal veterans and visitors. Look for more information in the next issue of the Americal Newsletter.

Little Rock photos on the internet

PNC John (Dutch) has provided a slide show of Little Rock reunion photos on the website that he maintains for his Vietnam M.P. unit. The photos can be seen at <http://www.dutch23mp.bravepages.com/reunion.htm>.

Memorial Day 2003- Washington, D.C.By John L. Insani; 11th LIB**Americal Division's honored dead remembered at special observances in Washington, D.C. on Memorial Day 2003**

Members of the Americal Division Veterans Association gathered on Monday, May 26, 2003 at the Americal memorial in Arlington National Cemetery and later at the Vietnam Wall to honor the Americal's fallen heroes. Early on the morning of Memorial Day, Past National Commander Ed Marsh and John Insani laid a wreath at the Americal Memorial in Arlington National Cemetery. They then proceeded to the Korean War Memorial in Washington, D. C. where they placed a wreath at the head of the memorial near the flagpole.

At 1:00 PM, Marsh, Insani, and Ervin L. Russell (cheered on by fellow Americal vet Vernon Sones) took part in the formal Memorial Day ceremony procession to the Wall where they placed, on call, the Americal wreath. The wreath was decorated with blue and white flowers and a large Americal emblem in the center.

The Americal's participation and wreath laying in the ceremony received special recognition thanks to the coordinating efforts of Ms. Regina Talley. Ms. Talley, whose brother was KIA in the Americal in Vietnam, is a dedicated volunteer with the U.S. Park Service at the Vietnam Wall. She always arranges for the Americal group to be recognized and ensures that we always have a special place to lay the wreath laying procession to the Wall.

Jan C. Scruggs, Master of Ceremonies, made special note of the Americal as did the two keynote speakers, Vietnam veterans Senator Chuck Hagel from Nebraska and Brigadier David Grange. At the conclusion of the formal ceremony both keynote speakers shook hands and mingled with the Americal contingent.

The beautiful and memorable service included an outstanding pre-ceremony performance by Nancy Sinatra. Ms. Sinatra also was very gracious and spoke to our group after the ceremony. Also participating in the ceremony was an Armed Forces Color Guard, stirring remarks by the keynote speakers, and bagpipe player Christopher Jackson playing Amazing Grace, and finally Taps. Mother Nature graced the event by holding off the rain until after the ceremony. Six manes were added to the Wall during the ceremony and there are now 58,235 names on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

After the ceremony we checked on the ongoing construction at the site of the WWII Memorial. That construction is well underway with some pillars in place and completion and dedication is scheduled for May 28-29, 2004. The Americal will undoubtedly be represented at the dedication.

ADVA well represented at annual Kokomo veterans' event

Approximately 75 Americal Division veterans checked in at the ADVA booth at the 21st annual Howard County Vietnam Veterans reunion in Kokomo, IN. The event was held on September 18-21, 2003 on property owned by the HCVV organization.



PNC Ronald Ellis and National Commander Richard Scales, pictured above, were among the ADVA officers that helped staff the ADVA information table. They had a supply of ADVA and Americal merchandise products for sale and did a brisk business. This event marked the first time that the newly acquired credit card machine was used to process sales of ADVA merchandise.

The Great Lakes Chapter had many members in attendance and used the event as a means to conduct a chapter meeting. The dates for the 22nd annual Kokomo reunion are September 16-17-18-19, 2004. Make your reservations now to attend.

Operation LZ-Oceanside II planned

ADVA member and 1/1st Cavalry Association president Terry Babler is once again organizing a fun event for all veterans. Operation LZ-Oceanside II All Veterans Reunion is scheduled for April 21-25, 2004 at Melbourne Beach, FL. The event will be headquartered at the Holiday Inn Oceanside Resort and will be held in conjunction with the 17th Annual Florida Vietnam Veterans Reunion. The reunion is held at nearby Wickham Park in Melbourne, FL. Everyone is invited.

LZ Oceanside II features a special standard room rate of \$77 per night plus tax. Guests should make their own hotel reservations by contacting the Holiday Inn Melbourne Oceanside Resort, 2605 North A1A, Indiatlantic, FL. When calling be sure to mention you are with the Operation LZ/Oceanside II All Veterans Reunion to get the special discount rates. Reservations can be made by calling [redacted] or local [redacted].

The event requires no pre-registration fee. Special attractions include pool parties, a hospitality room, veterans activities at Wickham Park, and a special airboat gator patrol. Event sponsors include 1st Squadron/1st Cavalry Association, 23rd Military Police Assn., Wisconsin Vietnam Veterans Chapter, Great Lakes Regional Chapter Americal Division (WI, IN, IL, MN, MI), and VietNow National.

For more information contact Terry Babler at [redacted] or e-mail [redacted]

Editor's note: The following was forwarded PNC "Dutch" DeGroot.

Dutch,

I just retired from the Air Force after 24 years because I will be 60 in a few days. However, I got a job with the contractor in Base Operations (which is the job I originally started in so long ago).

They had a great retirement ceremony for me on 7 June. They made up a CD of my photos from Vietnam and the different photos kept rotating on the big screen during the ceremony. My wife and I got all sorts of certificates and gifts.

I got a Distinguished Service Medal, but my favorite thing was a very large triple matted, framed print of several CH-47 Chinooks landing on an LZ in Vietnam. The artist put the 178th Aviation "Boxcar" markings on them and serial numbers of Chinooks that were there when I was in the unit.

Chuck Dinges; 178th ASHC

Dear editor,

I have a question for you. I served with the Americal Division, 196th Infantry, 4/31st, C Co. from 18 AUG 70 to 30 SEPT 71. I had an 11 break in service and entered the USAR on 17 May 1982. I am still an active member of the USAR serving as Commander, 256th Combat Support Hospital, Brooklyn, Ohio.

I don't run into too many Vietnam veterans in uniform anymore, much less Americal veterans in uniform. Do you know how many Americal veterans are still active in the military?

LTC Terry Washam, USAR; 4/31st Inf., 196th LIB

Editor's note: COL Tom Bedient (U.S. Army, Retired) has surmised that the number of Vietnam veterans still on active duty on January 1, 2004 may be as few as 100. It may be fair to guess that there may be 20 or so Americal veterans still on active duty at this time.

Dear editor,

I am a graduate student at American University and I'm doing an oral history project on African Americans in the Vietnam War. I am trying to locate potential interviewees (especially in, but not exclusive to the Washington D.C. area) for the project. You can write to me at [redacted], Washington, DC 20016. My phone number is [redacted] and my e-mail address is [redacted]. Thanks for your time.

Matt Robbins

Editor's note: The following was received by Terry Babler, President of the 1/1st Cav. Assn., and Les Hines, ADVA Vietnam Historian.

Terry and Les;

This is in regard to my inquiry about Dan Thompson, Trp. A, 1/1st Cavalry. As a direct result of the notice you posted in the 1/1 Cavalry Association's newsletter, Dennis Fay of Ft. Myers, Florida contacted me. Dennis is originally from New Jersey and served with Dan Thompson from basic training to Vietnam. Dennis and I had a lengthy conversation. He discussed their tours in general and the specific action that took Dan's life. I shall type up the information in detail for my own file later this week.

In a nutshell, Troop A and Troop B were attempting to flank elements of the NVA's 2nd Division at Tam Ky on May 23, 1968. Dan, a tank man, volunteered to drive an APC that day. Evidently, the shortage of full crews and a lack of spare parts necessitated assignment changes and/or double-duty at any given time. Dan's APC ran over a heavy explosive that could have been detonated either by contact or manually by NVA choosing their target. The resulting explosion was horrific and the APC crew was all badly wounded. Dan expired the following day.

If you should come across the after action report, or other information on the operation at Tam Ky, I would appreciate a copy. Otherwise, my quest is complete. For me, knowing what happened enhances the remembrances and will sustain them for many years to come. Once again, I thank both of you for your assistance in helping me to gather the information. Best regards.

Tom Casey

Editor's note: The following was forwarded by Bill Allen, 11th LIB.

Dear Bill,

I'm the chairperson for a memorial project named Operation Remember, an effort to locate photos of all 1,046 Sons of Maryland lost in Vietnam. After visiting your site and reviewing the casualty list I came across several 11th LIB casualties from Maryland.

We have collected over 800 photos to date and have posted them to the online version of the Maryland Vietnam Veterans Memorial. You can learn more about Operation Remember at: <http://www.serve.com/mdvva/memorial/mdnames/index.htm>

I am writing about a specific soldier. He was PFC Tollie Bailey of Baltimore, MD, KIA on 9/7/69. We have been searching for his photo with no success. I'm hoping that some of your contacts might be able to help us locate either his family or a photo. Please pass the word.

Jim Gerity, Chairperson, Operation Remember
Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 451; www.vva451.org

Dear editor,

While on an Alaskan cruise in July 2003 I picked up a copy of the book Firebirds by Chuck Carlock. I located the book at a Salvation Army thrift store in Ketchikan, Alaska. Halfway through it I found myself amazed at the tales I was reading.

I was born in 1964 so I grew up as you guys were risking your ass defending our great country. Please pass on my sincere thanks for his and all your brothers' sacrifices. I live in California and loving our country is almost a misdemeanor out here. Please send help.

I will never forget you guys and what you did. I teach my eleven-year-old beautiful daughter to respect those who serve and who served. Thank you.

Christopher J. Martin

Dear editor,

I was company commander of B Co., 1/6th Inf., 198th LIB, from February 1971 through October 1971. We were based out of LZ Dottie and then Chu Lai. In October 1971 I set up and ran the in-country training center in DaNang for the 196th LIB. This was when the Americal began its stand down. I rotated home in January 1972. I retired as a Colonel in 1995 after 26 years. I am now supporting the Army's Logistics Transformation Agency at Ft Belvoir. I guess I am another one of those "Retired Army, still serving!"

I have copies of award orders with names of soldiers and a 1/6th battalion roster that I would like to provide to the ADVA if you folks need it. I am also sending the 1/6th material to Wayne Johnson for the 1/6th website. Congratulations on the Americal website. It has been a while since I visited it and it looks great!

Lars E. Larson; Co. B, 1/6th Inf.
Fairfax Station, VA

Dear editor,

I would like for veterans to know that the 1st platoon of Co. B, 1/46th Infantry had its first reunion in 2001 in Pennsylvania. The 2002 reunion was held in North Carolina and the 2003 reunion was in Connecticut. Our next reunion is planned during 2004 in Indiana.

We are trying to contact all platoon members, particularly those who served during 1968 through 1970. We have a platoon roster and we are very interested in contacting as many platoon members as possible. We have also been successful at collecting the names of some members who served in Co. B but in other platoons. Anyone from Co. B may send me their information and I will be more than glad to add them to a company roster.

Eclemus (Tim) Wright; Co. B, 1/46th Inf.
[REDACTED]

Dear editor,

I have in my possession a military memento -- a soldier's Vietnam Zippo lighter, and would like to return it to the original owner, if alive, or his family, if they want it.

The lighter says: Viet Nam, 68 69 Xuan Loc, 23rd Infantry Division. The name on the back is HEAN, R.N. and there is a number beneath the name: 2451730. I would like to attempt to return this possession to whom it belongs.

Amanda Gersh; [REDACTED]

Dear editor,

I was a member of the 11th LIB that shipped out of Hawaii bound for Vietnam in December 1967. I joined the brigade in April 1967 and started with Co. C but ended up in Co. D. I am looking for anyone from my old unit. Contact me at [REDACTED]

Louis (Uncle Ben) Queen; 11th LIB

Dear editor,

I am looking for anyone who knew CWO James D. (Jim) Hannan. He was with 123rd Avn. Bn. from February through November 1968. He was aircraft commander for General Gettys when a crash occurred in mid-November 1968. Current Secretary of State Colin Powell was on board as division S-3. I am looking for any crewmembers or other witnesses. Jim is deceased. I'm his brother and I am also a vet. Please write me at [REDACTED], Pittsburgh, PA 15222.

Neal Hannan

Dear editor,

I am seeking Americal Division vets who served during 1969-1970. My father Dennis W. Pollock served with the Americal from 5 July 1969 to 4 July 1970. He passed away in 2002. I am seeking vets who may remember him. Contact me at [REDACTED], Vincennes, IN 47591.

Ron Pollock

Dear editor,

I have been conducting research on my brother PFC George Carlough who proudly served and gave his life on 22-Jan-1969 at grid BS748811. He was assigned to 4/3rd Inf., 11th LIB. I am looking for anyone who may have served with him. Please write to me at [REDACTED], Plano, TX 75025. My phone number is [REDACTED].

Jim Carlough

Dear editor,

I am looking for anyone who served with Co. A, 3/1st Inf., 11th LIB from December 1967 until November 1968, Please write me at 95 Decarolis Dr., Tewksbury, MA, 01876.

Dave Orndorff; Co. A, 3/1st Inf.

Contributing Editor reports on recent visit to Vietnam

Plans for possible group tour in 2005

Dear members,

I returned from Vietnam on September 14. Mick Samples, also from the 5/46th Inf., accompanied me and remained there for a few more days to see some sights he had not previously seen. I was able to visit many of the areas in the 5/46th AO, including sights on the Batangan Peninsula.

I took a video of about one hour and fifty minutes, which will be edited with titles and subtitles to help the viewer keep track of my video journey. Included in the spots we visited: Son My (My Lai), Pinkville, Batangan Cape, and LZ Minuteman.

We also stumbled on a tunnel complex that was previously a VC hospital and is now a memorial. This place is not advertised for tourists. The U.S. Marines destroyed it and apparently killed about 60 VC. We took lots of video. Later the local government official called our guide and asked why we deviated from our schedule. Our guide told the official, "We got lost". I took our Vietnamese guide into areas that he did not know existed.

We continued our tour and visited LZ Dottie (as seen from Highway 1), LZ Ann, LZ Paradise, and the headwaters of the Tra Bong River. We saw Riverboat South & North where 5/46th, 23rd MP River Rats, and Marine CAP teams) once were.

We saw LZ Gator in detail. While there we interviewed a former VC. He didn't want a camera on him but Mick took photos of the VC while I talked to him. We'll have to see how that came out. We then went to Chu Lai and An Ton Village just north of Chu Lai. This stop included the An Ton river and the Highway 1 and railroad bridges hit hard by the VC in Tet, 1968. The trip was completed with a drive down to Duc Pho and a trip out to the Tra Bong Mountains by way of the Tra Bong road, the "Cinnamon Road". The weather was very HOT and Humid and it was the rainy season.

I will make the video or DVD available once it is edited in a few weeks. I will also provide a written description of the journey, with background information, portions of maps, etc., to help guide the viewer. I will try to keep the costs low, in the \$15-18 range, including postage and handling.

Vietnam is rapidly changing. There were new hard-surfaced roads on the Batangan Peninsula. The northern part of the peninsula will someday have deepwater harbors and an industrial zone as well as an oil refinery. (Vietnam currently sends its crude oil to Japan for refining.) Chu Lai will also have a deep-water port and industrial zone. They plan to have a commercial airport in 5-10 years.

The grass hootches we remember in the villages are all but gone. There are lots of small cottage industries such as brick plants that have enabled the Vietnamese to upgrade their housing. I am thankful I visited Tri Binh (1), north of LZ Gator, during my 1997 visit to Vietnam. At that time I found my old hootch that I used when I was there with my platoon during the war. I re-visited Tri Binh (1) on this trip and the old hootch had been knocked down to make a bigger house.

I got lots of information and perspective to plan for an Americal group tour in 2005. I think we can get good rates. I tentatively plan to have more information on a tour at the 2004 reunion in Reno, NV. I am working with some travel agencies to see what kind of arrangements can be made especially for Americal veterans.

Please pass this on to your Americal veteran contacts. Let me know if you are interested in receiving a copy of the video or DVD. I can be contacted at [REDACTED], Medina, OH 44256, [REDACTED]. Out Here

Dave Taylor; 5/46th Inf.
Contributing Editor, Americal Newsletter

Vietnam veterans reunited; brothers for life

By Christi Irwin

The date was Saturday, July 26th, 2003. The place was the Heartland Inn, Des Moines, Iowa. A reunion was taking place that would reunite veterans of the Vietnam War. They were former members of Co. D, 4/3rd Infantry, 11th Light Infantry Brigade.

My name is Christi Irwin. Three years ago I started a journey to find some young men who were in Vietnam with my father, PFC David C. Irwin. My father is a disabled American veteran who lost his left arm up to the elbow in Vietnam. I often heard my father talk of the guys he knew during the war so I set out on a journey to find the young men. Little did I know at the same time a man by the name of Dan Behrens was on his own journey. He was trying to locate the men who were in Co. D in Vietnam with his brother.

Dan's story began a long time ago. His brother, Thomas Martin Behrens, was killed-in-action in Vietnam. Dan began looking for the young men who knew his brother. You see, Dan was young when he lost his brother. As you and I well know, when you lose someone close to you, you still love him or her as if they were still here. I don't know a lot about Dan's feelings of losing his brother, but we all know how it is to lose a loved one.

I believe Dan first found Dean Edmondson, then Grover Rowe. As it turned out I was also looking for Mr. Rowe. So with a strange turn of events and a miracle from God, I crossed paths with Dan. I communicated with him for some two years. As we talked we started just having fun and tried to see just how many of these fellows we could find. Little did we know what would eventually take place.

So we started with Dean and Grover. Then came Sam Pierce, Roger Able, John Sears, Peter (Rico) Rice, Raymond Conklin, Robert Van Tholen, Patrick Kelley, John Gonzales, Bruce Flaherty, Gary Edgecomb, and many more. The list just kept getting longer. Dan and I talked to these men. Mr. Flaherty he came and visited my father. This was a tearful yet happy reunion in itself.

Dan and I decided to see if we could get these men together. So invitations went out and the reunion date was set. As the time came closer we were all excited to get there. We figured on a few of the fellows coming. Little did we know that it would be more than we ever dreamed of.

As the guys started showing up on Friday they greeted each other with hugs and handshakes. They told stories and talked of

life after Vietnam. They talked of the turmoil, the joy, and the fact of losing the guys in Vietnam. For once in their life, as the guys arrived, they were welcomed with a sign. The sign Welcome Home Delta Company. That was probably one of the first times these fellows were told that.

My father once said, "At some point in Vietnam, we were all each other had. And you never knew if the buddy next to you was going to be the last person you would see. So we stuck together." If one life was lost, they all lost a part of themselves. That was their only family. If one soldier fell, they all stumbled.

Emotionally, it took its toll on these men. The war was over and they were sent home. Some never wanted to look back, and most were afraid to. Yet they all came to see the others, not knowing what to expect.

The day of the reunion we all gathered in the banquet room. Brother Raymond Conklin, led us in prayer. Before he started the prayer he read a verse from the bible. I don't know what verse it was but it went something like this: There is no man greater than the man who lays down his life for his brother. That is when the tears fell, the hearts broke, and the room fell silent.

Even through the laughter and joy of being reunited, there were tears for two soldiers were not there to greet their former comrades. Their names are Thomas Behrens and Duane Downing. They were there in our hearts, and we thought of the whole time. They both gave their lives for our country. Tom's mom and dad were there to see the guys.

I believe in my heart that the reunion brought closure to Dan. He found that the guys who were with his brother in Vietnam were some of the greatest guys a man could have for friends. He knows now what a good person his brother was, and that each and every one of these guys loved him. The loss of Tom and Duane took its toll on their parents, but the parents know now their sons were with men who cared for them.

I learned a lot of things I never knew. After 30 some odd years these guys still knew who each other was. There is talk of another reunion. We hope there are more fellows who will attend. I told the vets that I hoped that they would stay in contact with one another. They lost each other once and I hope they never lose each other again.

Dan Behrens put a lot of work in this whole thing. Thank you, Dan, for everything. Thank you for letting me be a part of this. You are truly a great guy. I hope life treats you with the best of happiness. You are a great friend and very appreciated.

There was another young man by the name of Robert Ramsey who was kind enough to help us with our search for these

men. He was a lot of help and I thank him very much. I am sure Dan feels the same way. Mr. Ramsey, I hope and wish you all the best and thank you so much for your help. You were very kind enough to give Dean all the e-mails. You may not know it but you were a part of this as much as we were.

So I leave you all with a personal note that comes from the heart. Thank you all for coming and sharing your stories. But most of all, I would like to say, Welcome Home, My Heroes, My Soldiers Of War. You have all been so good to us and I hope God blesses you all with all you ever need in life. May your hearts be lighter and may there always be a smile on your face when you think of your buddies. Know that the bond among you will never be broken. For blood is thicker than water, but love is thicker than blood. Thank you all for letting me share my story and I hope I have many more to write.

My soldier with wings

They say there's a guardian angel, for each of us on earth. To guide us through our troubled times, although they can't be seen or heard.

They are sent down to us, from the heavens up above, giving us God's guidance, and everlasting love.

For my guardian angel is special. He's someone I never knew. A young man who fought for his country, who gave his life for you and me.

The day that he was taken, his loved ones tears fell like rain. Yet the heavens were rejoicing, because an angel had earned his wings.

To his family he was special, a hero to us all. He stood up for his country, not knowing he would fall.

So when you look upon the wall, Thomas Behrens, the name you see for that's my guardian angel, my soldier with wings.

Written by : Christi Irwin
In memory of
Thomas Martin Behrens
Sept. 4, 1943 - Oct 31, 1968

Air Assault Badge requested for Vietnam veterans

The Air Assault Parity Coalition Stakeholders Meeting was held on 14 August 2003 in Reno, Nevada in conjunction with the 101st Airborne Division Association Annual Reunion. National Commander Richard Scales represented the Americal Division Veterans Association at the gathering.

One of the enduring images to come from the Vietnam War is that of a Huey helicopter inserting troops into the heart of the battlefield. It was know to participants at that time as a "combat assault". Today's soldiers receive special training for such assaults and receive special recognition for their achievements by the award of the Air Assault Badge.

Reno participants agreed on Option One, the retroactive award of the current Air Assault Badge to veterans of the Vietnam War. The following draft for a bill in Congress is being circulated for feedback pending submission to Congress for action:

DRAFT FOR A BILL

To direct the Secretary of the Army to amend the award eligibility for the current Air Assault Badge to include retroactive awards for Vietnam combat veterans.

SECTION 1. FINDINGS.

Congress makes the following findings:

1. Air assault technology was developed in 1964 by the 11th Air Assault Division (Test).
2. Air assault technology was refined in combat operations in the Republic of Vietnam by combat units conducting air assault operation between 1965 and 1972.
3. During the development of the current Air Assault Badge award, between 1974 and 1978, the Army "considered and rejected" retroactive awards to Vietnam combat veterans.
4. The failure of the Army to make a retroactive award to Vietnam combat veterans resulted in additional insults to Vietnam combat veterans who were ridiculed by the public upon return from combat.
5. Repeated requests to the Army for the retroactive awarding of the current Air Assault Badge have been denied.
6. The retroactive award of the current Air Assault Badge is supported by the Air Assault Parity Coalition, the 101st Airborne Division Association, the 1st Cavalry Division Association, the Americal Division Association, the 11th Air Assault Division (Test) Association, the 101st Airborne Division Vietnam Veteran Associations, the 506th Airborne Infantry Regiment Association, the 196th Infantry Association, and the Illinois Veterans of Foreign Wars.

SECTION 2. RETROACTIVE AWARD OF THE AIR ASSAULT BADGE TO VIETNAM COMBAT VETERANS.

- a. The Secretary of the Army shall amend the award eligibility for the current Air Assault Badge to include, "Awarded to individuals who, prior to 1 April 1974, participated in at least one combat air assault while assigned or attached to a combat unit conducting air assault operations in the Republic of Vietnam.
- b. Participation in at least one combat air assault while assigned or attached to a combat unit conducting air assault operations may be verified by the previous award of the Combat Infantry Badge, Combat Medical Badge, Air Medal, Aviator Wings or Aircrew Wings while serving in the Republic of Vietnam or other official military records.

Vietnam veterans and Hepatitis C

Guys,

I have lost three buddies this year from Hepatitis C. Another one may be gone any day. Two of the guys were with me in Vietnam. This is crazy. We have to try and do something. What do you think?

Bill Allen; 1/20th Inf., 11th LIB

The following excerpt about Hepatitis C is taken from the VA website at <http://www.appc1.va.gov/PSHepC/>

Why should I get tested for Hepatitis C?

The symptoms of Hepatitis C infection are often very mild. You may not have any symptoms at all. Still, Hepatitis C is a serious illness. If you have Hepatitis C, it may never go away. Over time, it can cause other health problems, such as cirrhosis (or scarring of the liver) and liver cancer. Finally, because it stays in your body, you can give Hepatitis C to someone else.

How do I decide if I should get tested for Hepatitis C?

Talk with your VA doctor about being tested if:

- You had a blood transfusion or organ transplant before 1992
 - You shared needles or works to inject drugs, even if it was only once, many years ago
 - You were on long-term kidney dialysis
 - You were a healthcare worker and had contact with blood on the job
 - Your mother had Hepatitis C when she gave birth to you
- In addition, the Veterans Health Administration recommends testing if:

- You are a Vietnam-era veteran
- You have had exposure to blood on your skin
- You have had multiple sexual partners
- You have had tattoos or body piercings
- You have ever snorted cocaine
- You have liver disease
- You have a history of drinking a lot of alcohol
- You have had an abnormal liver function test
- You wish to be tested

What is the test for Hepatitis C like?

The test to see if you have Hepatitis C is very simple and will only take a few minutes. Your doctor will take a small sample of your blood and send it to a laboratory. You will find out the results in one or two weeks.

Where can I get tested?

Any veteran can get tested for Hepatitis C. Call your local VA medical center for an appointment.

If I don't have Hepatitis C infection, can I get a vaccine?

No. There is no vaccine (or shot) that will keep you from getting Hepatitis C. There are vaccines that can protect you from other kinds of Hepatitis. Ask your doctor for more information.

How can I protect myself from Hepatitis C infection?

There are lots of things you can do to protect yourself from Hepatitis C infection. The most important thing is to avoid other people's blood or things that might have other people's blood on them. Here are some suggestions:

- Don't inject drugs
- Practice safe sex
- If you are a health care worker, follow standard precautions
- Don't share personal items that might have blood on them.
- Talk with your doctor about Hepatitis C

Looking For: Anyone who knows Stan Proctor, D Co., 5/46, 198th LIB, 69-70. Contact: Jack Scott

, Havana, Fl 32333

Looking For: Anyone in D Co., 26 Engr., 09/68 to 06/69. Contact: Val Shaul

717 NE Wendy Lane, Gresham, Or 97030

Looking For: Ronnie Welch, Dale Walz, Lt James Montgomery; A Co., 4/3rd, 3rd Platoon - Jan 1971 to Nov 1971 Contact: Wally Cullen

Ipswich, Ma 01938

Looking For: Dave Cartmill, B, 4/21st Inf., 1970. Contact: Charles Alexander

, Arlington, Tx 76016

Looking For: Anyone with A Co. 1/6th, 198th, Aug 70-71. Contact: Don Hayes

3920 Jarman Hollow Rd., Palmyra, TN 37142

Looking For: Bruce Kendrick, Co. E, 4/3rd Inf. Contact: Chock Jones

, Galt, CA 95632

Looking For: Michael Sink, Frank Tadesco?, Ken Hurt, Sam Pierce, or anyone else, C/4/21. Contact: Lee Sands

mailto: , New Boston, TX 75570

Looking For: Sgt James Quintero, 70-71, E, 1/6th Inf. Contact: Sgt Paul Cramer

, De Pere, Wi 54115

Looking For: Members 198th 1/52nd Inf., 68/69. Contact: Wm Murphy

Booneville, Ms 38829-2015

Looking For: Anyone D Battery 1/82nd Arty., 1969-1970. Other Info: I am seeking any recollection / information relating to an incident in which Captain Scott Schneider was killed in Aug. of 1970. Contact: Art Gosnell

, Sioux City, IA 51103

Looking For: Anyone A 2/1 196th LIB, Arl 1967 to Oct. 1967. Contact: Noah O. Lindsey

, Winston-Salem, NC 27107-6124

Looking For: Carroll Cashette, C Co. 4/3, 11th then 198th Bde. in 70 and 71. Contact: Robert L. Rosane

, Ne 69101

Looking For: Anyone that served with my Dad, Salvatore(Sam) Danna, medical detachment 164th Inf., 1942-45. From

Looking For: Asa Putnam, or anyone, Co E, 723rd Maint Bn, Jan thru Dec 1970. Contact: Jim R. Turner

, Yerington, NV 89447

Looking For: Cpt. Paul Goldman, 6/11th Arty. 11th Inf. Bde, 1967-1968. Contact: Jim Franklin

, Shelby, NC 2815

Looking For: Members of C Co, 5th/46th Inf, 198th LIB, from 04/69 - 09/69. Contact: Everett Rowles

, Ogden, UT 84412-2802

Looking For: Buzz Gabbert, Williams, Larry Fella, C/2/1, 1968. Contact: Bill Tidwell

, Everett, WA 98203

Looking For: John E. Ring, D Co., 5/46 198th. Contact: Sandoval {PACO}

, Walker, St., Angleton, TX 77515-4807

Looking For: Roger Morrison, Co B, 123 AVN Bn (Warlord), 1969. Contact: Bob Monaghan

, St Louis, MO 63124

Looking For: Anyone Co B 1/6th Inf 198th Inf Bde, 9/69 to 9/70. Contact: Ron Dobiesz

, North Tonawanda, NY 14120

Looking For: Michael Bayshore, 523rd Sig Bn, 1970. Contact: William Frederick Stevens

, Guilford, NY 13780

Looking For: Anyone who knew PFC Edwin J Harris, 1941-1945. Co. K, 182nd Infantry. Contact: Dianne Harris

, Hinsdale, MA 01235

Looking For: Anyone in 5/46 in 1970-71. Contact: Marcus Beaufort

, Greelyville, SC

Looking For: Anyone from Battery B, 245th Field Artillery, specifically Gim Malaro, Caulfield. Contact: Seymour Rosenwasser

, Boca Raton, Fl

Looking For: Jim Timmerman, B Co. 1/20th 11 LIB, 68-69. Contact: Vincent Anyzeski

, East Haven, CT 06512

Looking For: John Razzis, Eugene Montgomery, Sgt. Steve McGuire, A Co., 1/6th Inf. 68-69. Contact: Jerry Doc O'Connor

, St. Petersburg, FL 33710

Looking For: Anyone, D Co., 2/1 196th, 1970. Contact: Tuck

, Tuscaloosa, Al 35405

Looking For: Anyone in C Co., 26th Engineers 1969 - 1970. Motor Pool, Sp4 Flowers, SSG Romero, Sp4 McGuire, Sp4 Joyner. Contact: Van Austin Hoyle

Looking For: Carl W. McDaniels, C Co. 1/52nd 198LIB. March 69 to WIA June 69. Contact: Gary W. Franklin

, Lubbock, TX 79424-2408

Looking For: Rivera, PFC, 11th Light Infantry Brigade, from Sept. 1969. Contact: John Roy

, Lahoma, OK 73754

Looking For: Anyone, D 1/6 198th, Sept. 69 thru Sept. 70. Contact: Harlan Prieve

, Colorado Springs, CO 80907

Looking For: Holbert Locke, 223rd Field Artillery, 1944 and Chet Whitting, Americal Division Bank, 1944. Contact: Glenn Ellis

, Riverside, Ca 92505

Looking For: Anyone D Co., 1/52 Inf., 1969 James Pitts or Randy Teele. Contact: Jack Scott

, Havana, Fl 32333

Looking For: David Rice, Lester Bruder, George Walsh, D/2/1 196th LIB in 67-68. Contact: Wayne Carlton

, Bartlett, TN 38133

Looking For: Kenneth Wright and Lou Tucci, Admin Co. Americal Div., 1967 1968 and possibly 1969. Contact: Robert {Babyface} Wheeler

, Reno, NV 89509

Looking For: Larry Bailey, FDC HQ 3/16th Artillery 70-71, Contact: Jerry Ham

, Sarasota, FL 34241

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
Headquarters Americal Division
APO San Francisco 96374

AVDF-HL 10 May 1969
Subject: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 30 April 1969
(RSC-CSFOR-65) (RI) (U)

AMERICAL DIVISION TROOP LIST
(as of 30 April 1969)

1. HEADQUARTERS AMERICAL DIVISION

HHC, Americal Division
1st Sqdn, 1st Cav
F Troop, 8th Cav
415th Sig Det
570th TC Det
26th Engr Bn
160th Engr Det
523rd Sig Bn
23 MP Co
3d Mil Hist Det
USAMID (PROV)
52d MI Det
569th MI Det
635th MI Det
636th MI Det
328th RR Det

2. AMERICAL DIVISION ARTILLERY

HHB, Div Arty
6th Bn, 11th Arty
1st Bn, 14th Arty
3rd Bn, 82d Arty
3rd Bn, 16th Arty
3rd Bn, 18th Arty
1st Bn, 82nd Arty
6th Bn, 56th Arty (LESS OPCON)
G Btry, 55th Arty (.50 Cal)
B Btry, 2d Bn, 11th Arty, (FO Party and Metro Section)
251st Radar Det
252d Radar Det

3. AMERICAL DIVISION SUPPORT COMMAND

HHC and Band
23d S&T Bn
23d Med Bn
723d Maint Bn (-)
23d Admin Co
Co G (Ranger), 75th Inf
63d Inf Plt (CTT)
Americal Combat Center (PROV)

4. 16TH COMBAT AVIATION GROUP

HHC, 16th CAG (Cbt)
14th Combat Avn Bn
71st Avn Co (Aslt Hel)
174th Avn Co (Aslt Hel)
176th Avn Co (Aslt Hel) 10 May 1969
534 Med Det
756 Med Det
14th Security Plt
123d Avn Bn (Cbt) (Inf Div)
132d Avn Co (Aslt Spt Hel)
178th Avn Co (Aslt Spt Hel)
E Co, 723rd Maint BN
335th Trans Co

5. 11TH INFANTRY BRIGADE

HHC, 11th Inf Bde
3d Bn, 1st Inf
4th Bn, 3d Inf
1st Bn, 20th Inf
4th Bn, 21st Inf
E Trp, 1st Cav
59th Inf Plt (Scout Dog)
90th Chem Det
31st Public Information Det
327th Avn Det
Combat Weather Team 2

6. 196TH INFANTRY BRIGADE

HHC, 196th Inf Bde
2d Bn, 1st Inf
3d Bn, 21st Inf
4th Bn, 31st Inf
F Trp, 17th Cav
48th Inf Plt (Scout Dog)
27th Chem Det
10th Public Information Det
Combat Weather Team 1

7. 198TH INFANTRY BRIGADE

HHC, 198th Inf Bde
1st Bn, 6th Inf
1st Bn, 46th Inf
5th Bn, 46th Inf
1st Bn, 52d Inf
H Trp, 17th Cav
57th Inf Plt (Scout Dog)
87th Chem Det

8. NON-DIVISIONAL UNITS

3d Plt, G Btry, 29th Arty, Searchlight (OPCON)
4th CA Plt
6th CA Plt
51st CA Plt
Det 3, 7th Psyop Bn (DS of Div)
USASSG, ACSI, DA
46th Engr Det
OL7, 5th Weather Sqdn, USAF

Return to Hill 102

The July 2003 issue of *American Heritage* magazine contains an article titled *Hill 102* written by Paul Critchlow. Critchlow served with Co. C, 2/1st Inf., 196th LIB in the Que Son Valley of South Vietnam. Critchlow describes Co. C's actions on August 19, 1969, when his unit walked off LZ West to reinforce Co. D, 2/1st Inf., under siege by the North Vietnamese Army.

Co. C closed with Co. D near the shelled out ruin of a French plantation building. As Critchlow, an artillery forward observer, settled in at the command post, a U.S. helicopter was shot down in a field nearby. One of those on board the chopper was Associated Press photographer Oliver Noonan.

A patrol sent to aid the chopper came under intense fire as they left their protected positions. Critchlow remembers, "The NVA had parted, allowed Charlie Company through, then closed behind us. Now we, too, were trapped."

Intense fighting flared off and on all day and into the night. Critchlow was kept busy directing close-in fire support to help repel the enemy attacks. At about midnight he was prone on his back holding a flashing strobe light into the air. The light guided the fire of a USAF AC-139 Spectre gunship. The gunship circled the surrounded Americans and sprayed a withering destructive fire on the stubborn enemy.

All of a sudden Critchlow spotted an NVA soldier inside the perimeter aiming a RPG launcher at him. Critchlow could not react fast enough. The RPG round exploded near his body and spun him into the air. He suffered a scalp wound, a broken arm, a shattered eardrum, and other injuries. At dawn he was evacuated from the battlefield with other wounded and the dead. "Out of the 130 men of Charlie Company who had walked into the valley, only 25 had walked out," he recalls.

Critchlow came home and walked the road of recovery. He read about Oliver Noonan's death in the helicopter crash and was fascinated by Noonan's willingness to take high risks in order to tell people about the war. Critchlow says of Noonan, "He became a hero to me." The events inspired Critchlow to attend the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism and to take a position with the Philadelphia *Inquirer*. He joined the brokerage firm Merrill Lynch in 1985 as head of its communications and public affairs group.

Jan Scruggs of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund asked him to serve on the VVMF corporate board. Critchlow had been involved in veterans' affairs for some time so he gladly accepted the post.

He had sometimes thought of returning to Vietnam and the place he was wounded. But he never went back. He got his chance in 1999 when the VVMF sent a delegation to Vietnam to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the fall of Saigon. Critchlow says, "Now there was not only a compelling reason to go; there was no excuse not to."

The article goes on to describe Critchlow's preparations and arrival in Vietnam. The group traveled to Hanoi and participated in scheduled events. While there, Critchlow had the opportunity to meet and visit with former officers of the 2nd NVA Division. One of these was Colonel Mai Thuan, division commander at the time of the 1969 battle. Critchlow recounts, "I shook hands with Mai Thuan, and suddenly we embraced. A good, hard embrace, with no trace of awkwardness. An embrace of enemies, and embrace of soldiers."

After a few days in Hanoi the group made its way to Ho Chi Minh City. Here Critchlow met journalists who had personally known and worked with Oliver Noonan. The next stop was DaNang and then towards Hiep Duc to Que Son Valley and Hill 102. Mr. Chinh, the tour guide, obtained the necessary official permissions for the Americans to delve deep into the Vietnamese countryside. The going was tedious and the Vietnamese "minders" continually warned the Americans not to take photos.

Finally the group had gone far enough and Critchlow recognized the spot that he had waited so long to see. He was visibly affected. "I was trembling. I realized I had never known what it meant really

to tremble, shaking uncontrollably as the memories flooded through all my senses."

The effect went beyond the physical. Critchlow realized that being at the spot where he was wounded 30 years prior brought him relief. It brought him understanding of what had happened to him and the others on the day of their fateful battle. He says, "Light, clearheaded, relieved, I had retrieved the part of my soul I had left there. As we roared out of the Que Son Valley on the motorbikes, I felt myself smiling."

But life deals many hands for us to play. A year and a half after his trip to Vietnam Critchlow worked in his office at the World Finance Center in New York City. The terrible crashes of September 11, 2001 occurred less than a block from where he was. He thought of surviving Vietnam and wondered if he was now to die in the streets where he worked.

Fortunately, he made it clear of the avalanche of falling debris and survived once again. He is now back at work in his office overlooking Ground Zero. But other Vietnam veterans were not so fortunate. Their lives were claimed by a new and terrifying war.

The flag of the United States of America

- is to be illuminated if displayed during the hours of darkness.
- is to be displayed on it own right, that is, on the observer's left.
- is not to be displayed below any other flag.
- is displayed at half-staff until noon on Memorial Day.
- is to be destroyed by burning when its service life has ended.
- can be laundered or dry cleaned as needed.
- can be gold fringed if desired.
- can be displayed even if it is an older flag with fewer stars.
- can be displayed if it was used to cover a casket.

The 21-gun salute

The custom of gun salutes began in the 14th century on the high seas with the salute by cannon. During that time, warships fired a seven-gun salute, probably selected for either its astrological or Biblical significance. Warships would also show their peaceful intentions when nearing a friendly port by disarming themselves (emptying their guns) and friendly shore batteries did the same. This then evolved from a meaningful gesture to a ritual salute, the shore batteries took to answering each gun of a warship with three shore salutes. Early British warships had seven guns to empty, when each was answered by three shore salutes that came to twenty-one.

By 1875, the 21-gun salute was established as the international salute, with the United States adopting the practice on August 18, 1875.

The twenty-one gun salute is fired in honor of a national flag, the head of state of a foreign nation, a member of a royal family, and the president, ex-president, and/or president elect of the United States. It is also fired at noon on the day of the funeral of the president, ex-president, or president elect of the United States.

"I Am A Man and I Am Old" – An Americal Vet Looks at America

Bill Mahon served with A Troop, 1st/1st Cavalry 1970-1971. As a City Councilman near Waco, Texas and full time Deputy Sheriff, his local radio comments on the first anniversary of 9/11 are still relevant today.
Bill Mahon

"I am a man and I am old" I said to myself as I lay in bed tonight, thinking of my life. I had said this many times in my life over the years in jest, and tonight I felt I meant it for the second time in earnest. I lay thinking of this speech, who would be listening and how much I really wanted to express.

The first time was a long time ago. Thirty-two years ago when, at eighteen I was a FNG in Vietnam. I said it only a few weeks later when I learned the terrible meaning of war. To say how or what I learned would only insult those in here as we each learned the same facts, only in our own very personal way. We each did what we thought was needed and we each have accounted for it in our hearts for a very long time.

And when our time in that man-made misery was finished we each came home to whatever our communities greeted us with. For some of us it was chaos. For some, a loving and understanding family and community support was found. Unfortunately for many of us, it felt worse than not coming home at all.

Even though that was a long time ago, each of us remembers it in our own way. Times and communities have changed. In 1972 I was run off the main street of Waco, Texas for wearing an Army fatigue uniform. Actually, it was a car lot and the words used were, "We don't want your kind, or need your business here so get off the lot".

In 1992 I was the Veterans Day Parade Association Chairman and led a 2,000-member parade down that very street, past that very car lot. It was not my goal, but it was a satisfying landmark in my life. It was to me, the return of patriotism to the city of Waco, Texas. Do not get me wrong. There were many Veteran Day Parades between 1972 and 1992 along that very route. It was my turn, my honor to be chairman and therefore it took on more significance to me personally.

It is now 2002. It is one year past September 11, 2001. And patriotism has been a surge that cannot be compared to - other than December 7, 1941.

On September 11, 2001, this country was invited into a brewing but not publicized conflict called terrorism. For

this country, our brothers and sisters in the armed forces has answered the challenge well. They have responded with the very furor and indignation of our entire nation.

Today we recognize every veteran from every conflict. We, the Vietnam Veterans are no more important than any other conflict and we must never try to be. But I promise you we are no less important.

A short while back, on September 11, 2002 I did a broadcast on five radio stations in Central Texas. I will briefly attempt to say what I tried to say then.

Prior to being interviewed, I was asked how I would like to be introduced. As a City Councilman for my city, or Deputy Sheriff (as I was in uniform during the interview).

I replied either or both. But I insisted I be introduced as a Vietnam Veteran. The interviewer did use all three and placed emphasis on the Veteran portion of my introduction. He then asked me what I would like to say to the more than two hundred thousand daily listeners of these stations.



Bill Mahon

I started: "Yes, I am a Vietnam Veteran and I have seen this country come full circle in the last thirty years. From a nation divided so publicly, it seemed to lose its grace; it's prestige in the world community. Today no nation on earth can stand taller than the United

States. If you were to judge this country by its response to the events of 9/11, you would find no more compassion, no more discipline and direction then that which the American people and their leadership have shown, by any other person or nation on this earth. There is so much love of this country at this time you cannot take a drop of oil and squeeze it between an American and his or her flag."

"This country takes this time to remember those persons who perished in the atrocities of September 11, a year ago. And in our remembrance we can only do justice for our nation and in their honor by being prepared for the future."

"This is a time to remember the very bottom line of our community defense against crime and mishap. The police and firemen and women. Yes, it is their job, as ours was to go to war. But neither they nor we are expected to see such arrogance and callousness of human life. We have heard of the bravery of many this past year, but there is one fact I feel the need to tell you all. Of those firemen that responded to the Twin Towers in New York City, dozens of those who died were volunteer-firemen. Not that this point makes them any different than any of the other volunteers or paid individuals that helped that day. I just wanted you to know of these individuals who volunteered all year round and responded with the rest. And died with the rest. So look at the volunteer organizations in your own city. Your fire departments, police departments, your churches and our schools need our help. They all have "Help Wanted" signs out and "You Are Welcome Here."

"So if you have a skill, share it. An extra dime, drop it in a basket or bucket somewhere. If 9/11 has taught us anything at all, it must be that only when we stand together will we endure whatever befalls us. I believe we now, more than anytime before, we need to know our neighbor and look after each other."

And as I am probably out of time anyway I want to only say one last thing, to each and every Veteran here. No matter where you are from or where you have gone. **WELCOME HOME.**

Items can now be paid for by credit card. Please include your name, card name (Visa or MC only), card number, and expiration date.



Americal Division
Polo Shirt
Sizes M-L-XL-XXL
White w/blue embroidery
\$25.00 postpaid

ITEM Description	SELL PRICE	Quantity	Total Price
ADVA PATCH – SMALL	\$4.00		
ADVA PATCH – LARGE	4.50		
AMERICAL PATCH DRESS BLUE	4.25		
AMERICAL PATCH SUBDUED	4.25		
ADVA 3 ½" STICKER	2.50		
AMERICAN FLAG PATCH	4.25		
AMERICAL CAR PLATE	8.00		
AMERICAL SHIELD PIN - LARGE	3.50		
AMERICAL CREST PIN	4.00		
ADVA WINDOW DECAL	2.00		
AMERICAL LAPEL PIN - SMALL	3.50		
AMERICAL TIE BAR	4.25		
CIB – MINI	5.00		
CMB – MINI	5.00		
182 ND INFANTRY CREST PIN	4.00		
UNDER THE SOUTHERN CROSS – BOOK	15.00		
BASEBALL CAP – WHITE - AMERICAL	12.00		
BASEBALL CAP – KAKAI - ADVA	12.00		
T-SHIRT – ADVA	15.00		
T-SHIRT – CIB	15.00		
TSHIRT – TAN – JUNGLE FIGHTER	18.00		
AMERICAN FLAG W/FRINGE	50.00		
AMERICAN FLAG W/GROMMETS	38.00		
AMERICAL DIVISION HISTORY VIDEO	15.00		
KOOZIE	3.00		
WHY DIDN'T YOU GET ME OUT – BOOK	15.00		
SAPPERS IN THE WIRE – BOOK	20.00		
AMERICAL CHALLENGE COIN	15.00		
LADIES DENIM SHIRT S,M,L,XL	29.00		
YEAR IN NAM-BOOK	15.00		
WHITE ADVA POLO SHIRT	25.00		

Total amount of order: \$

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